REMINISCENCES

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FERDINAND DE ROTHSCHILD

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Being of an impatient disposition I made my appearance in this world some little time before I was expected, and by my impetuosity imperilled my Mother's life as well as my own . The French nurse who was to provide me with my first repasts had not yet been summoned from her village , and my Mother being too ill to take her place, I almost perished from inanition . Yet, somehow, I was made to survive until the nurse arrived .

I was born on December I7th, I839, in Paris at number I7 Rue Laffitte - my Grandfather's house - and in the same room as that in which Napoleon III had first seen the light. After he had become Emperor,Napoleon came to inspect the former residence of Queen Hortense , and was received with much ceremony by my family. A magnificent hotel 'entre cour et jardin', it communicated by a private door with the next house, that of my Grand-Uncle James, which in turn was connected in a similar way with the offices of our Paris firm . After their marriage in I825 my Parents intended making Paris their home, but circumstances willed otherwise. My paternal Grandfather was then living in Vienna and his elder brother Anselm lived in Frankfort. Anselm had no children , and requiring a strong hand

to help him in his business , he summoned my Father to his assistance ; and at Frankfort my Father remained .

Much has been written about the early history of our house, but most of the tales which have obtained general credence are either garbled or altogether fictitious. It has been asserted , for instance , that our surname only dates from the Napoleonic invasion of Germany , when the Jewish inhabitants of Frankfort were obliged by the Emperor to assume a surname , a custom they had not hitherto followed. On passing through Frankfort recently , however, my attention was drawn to a sale of rare books , and I was shown some catalogues of old coins dated I754-5 and signed 'A.M.Rothschild: ~~the Expert~~'. This disposes of one popular fallacy. Then again , it has been said that we took our surname from the town of Röskilde in Denmark, where my family is supposed to have originally lived. For my part, I should say that my ancestors derived their name from the red shield - in German,Rothschild- which hung over the door of their house in Frankfort. This shield served the office of a sign at a time when houses were not yet numbered, and when Jews, as a rule, had no surnames, and they adopted it as their crest in I8I9 when they were ennobled by the Emperor of Austria.

From what I have been told by a trustworthy authority who has studied the tombstones in the local cemetery , I have warrant for assuming that my family had already settled at Frankfort in the beginning of the sixteenth century ; but how long they had then been settled there , or whether , and when , they had hailed from Röskilde , or whether , as I am half

inclined to believe, they were descended from a tribe of Slavs from the south of Russia , who as stated by Gibbon, embraced Judaism long before the conversion of Russia to Christianity and afterwards migrated north and west, are hypotheses which will probably never be proved.

Be this as it may , my positive information about my ancestors begins with the expert in coins , Anselm Moses Rothschild ; and all that I know of him is, that he died in I756, and was the father of Mayer Anselm Rothschild, the virtual founder of our house , who was born in I754 and died in I8I2. He , too , was an expert in coins , and a general merchant. He passed some years in business at Hanover , then set up on his own account at Frankfort, and often visited Cassel to submit coins to the Elector of Hesse, the father of the late Duchess of Cambridge . The Elector , in addition to being a collector of coins , was devoted to chess, and the chessboard proved to be the foundation on which the fortunes of our family were reared . It happened that one day my ancestor was ushered into the presence of the Prince while he was engaged in a game of chess. His Highness suddenly exclaimed -' Iam mate - it is useless to continue the game ! '- 'You are not mate,' my ancestor ventured to observe , having looked at the board,'in fact you can win the game.' - 'If that be so,' good-naturedly replied the Elector, 'take my place and finish it for me .' Mayer Rothschild did as he was bidden , sate in the Elector's chair , and checkmated his opponent . The Elector was so struck by the skill he displayed that he forthwith became interested in him, assisted him in extending his business , and finally

appointed him his financial agent in I80I.

One step led to another , and Mayer Rothschild rose to an eminent position in the financial world . He was as trustworthy as he was able , and at the time of the French invasion of Germany , the Elector placed all his valuables and securities in his keeping . Mayer died, as has been said , in I8I2 , before the termination of the war, and when peace had been concluded, his sons , who were carrying on the affairs of the firm, were called on by the Elector for the return of his fortune. To his delight they restored it , not merely in its entirety , but with accumulated interest .

Mayer Anselm Rothschild had a numerous family , of whom five sons and five daughters survived him . Of the five sons, his namesake Mayer Anselm was the head of the Frankfort firm, but the other brothers were sent off in their youth to the four corners of the civilised world to make their fortunes. Solomon , my paternal Grandfather , went to Austria, and was already known in the early days of this century as the 'Vienna Rothschild', although he was also the founder of our Paris house, and spent much of his time in the French capital . Nathaniel became the head of our London house, Charles of the Neapolitan branch , while James became the leading partner in our Paris firm .

Nathaniel went to Manchester in I797. His father had had business relations with the house of Peel, who made consignments of cloth and woollen goods to him at Frankfort, through the agency of a London firm, which of course charged a commission on these transactions. Nathaniel was directed to arrange

that the firm of Peel should make their consignments direct to Frankfort , so saving the commission . He prospered at Manchester , but in I806 he settled in London , where he continued his successful career, and was already called 'a pillar of the Exchange' before the Battle of Waterloo.

It has become a matter of history that Nathaniel received the news of the victory of Waterloo before it came to the knowledge of the public , or even of the Government. It has never been exactly ascertained in what manner the intelligence reached him ; nor whether, as has been alleged, that he took advantage of the information to lay in a good stock of Consols - which were then at a low figure - before he called , late at night,on Lord Liverpool, the then Prime Minister, and woke him up to impart to him the welcome tidings. The news was probably brought to my Grandfather by one of his many confidential messengers, and not , as generally supposed , by a carrier pigeon. I am confirmed in this opinion by the fact that he obtained from one of these messengers Napoleon's dressing-case , which was taken from the Emperor's travelling carriage on the field of battle. This he gave to my Mother , who afterwards made a present of it to my Brother Nathaniel. It is a small wooden case of the most highly finished workmanship, inlaid with the imperial arms and containing an infinite variety of gold instruments , as well as a secret drawer intended for poison .

The short but remarkable career of my Grandfather Nathaniel , who died in I836, furnished his contemporaries with material for many anecdotes, but I have preserved the recollection of the best authenticated of them only. Gold was a rare

commodity during the Napoleonic Wars, and the English Government had to purchase the precious metal at a high premium in order to pay the troops on foreign service . Suddenly the premium rose much higher , for the Government had found an unexpected competitor in my Grandfather who bought up all the gold he could secure, declining the very profitable offers he received for his stock from the Government brokers. Gold grew scarcer and dearer , the bullion brokers increased their offers, but to their intense dismay and the wonderment of the entire City, where the financiers could not fathom what his motive might be, he persisted in declining them . At last the Government became so embarrassed that they decided to send for my Grandfather,and in a personal interview he was invited to name his own price for his gold. He replied by at once handing over his stock to them at cost price , refusing to take any profit on the transaction . For this service to the State he was rewarded by being appointed financial agent to the Government, and eventually profited far more in business and position than if he had originally accepted the tempting offers of the Government brokers - who never forgave him . So much foresight, judgment and self-control in one who was not yet 'a pillar of the Exchange, amounted to genius.

In the 'forties' Frankfort was a bright and busy little town of considerable financial and political importance. Its financial importance was due to the fact of its being situated in the centre of several small principalities, which in I866 were swept under the banner of Imperial Germany , but which , at the time I write of, transacted their affairs with the

Frankfort merchants :while Frankfort owed its political importance to being a'free and independent'town - virtually a republic -, and the seat of the Bund, the German Confederation to which , under the Presidency of Austria, plenipotentiaries were accredited by all the European Powers.

It was a proud little city : proud of its wealth, which the Burgomasters and Corporation jealously guarded by decreeing that no paupers and none but Frankfort citizens should abide within its gates, denying the rights of citizenship even to the inhabitants of the nearest villages although they were within the territory of the republic ; proud of its aristocracy , though most of its patricians had no handles to their names ; proud of its history , for the Emperors of Germany had been crowned for centuries in its Cathedral amid a pomp and display , the recollection of which , when I was a child, still lingered in the memories of its older inhabitants ; and last but not least , proud of having been the birthplace of Goethe.

The Main on which Frankfort lies , derives most of its scanty waters from an affluent , the Neckar , and soon pours them into the Rhine at Mayence . The river is too shallow to allow of much navigation , still the quays were lively enough for much of the trade came in barges and flatbottomed vessels, while small steamers like the Thames penny-boats plied between the city and the neighbouring townlets. Only one bridge - once lined with houses and shops like the old London bridge - connected Frankfort with the townlet of Sachsenhausen on the opposite bank - a place renowned for the superlative ugliness

of its dialect . In a small tower at the end of this bridge lived in olden times the public executioner , and though the tower* had vanished long before my day the ghost of its dreaded tenant seemed to haunt the spot , and I never went by without a feeling of terror.

Formerly a fortified place , the ramparts and walls of Frankfort were demolished shortly after I8I5 , and the moat was filled up or converted into ponds. The watch-towers and gates alone remained ,the latter being closed at night and guarded by sentinels . Gardens , or Promenades as they were called , were laid out on the site of the walls , on which looked snug little villas, beyond which market gardens extended into the country. In these Promenades Frankforters walked and drove , and the cildren were duly exercised upon them . Every day and in all seasons I had to march round the town with my two Sisters and their governess, or with my Brother and our tutor - a performance which it took us precisely an hour to accomplish .

The environs of Frankfort were , and still are , lovely, but now one has to journey a greater distance to reach its rural surroundings . On the left bank of the Main stretches out the Forest of Frankfort, which in point of extent , of the variety and grandeur of its timber , and the beauty of its scenery , no other forest could surpass. There , on Sundays , Frankforters of all classes and all ages went on picnics to the Restaurants, partaking of indifferent coffee and chocolate and eating still more indifferent cakes - which , however, I thought delicious. Longer excursions were frequently made to the villages at the foot of the Taunus - which were magnif-

*I believe all these towers but one have now disappeared under the advancing tide of improvement.

fied in my eyes into a chain of gigantic mountains - to Soden particularly , a pretty little watering-place , where the best gruyère, black bread and cider , were to be had.

Since the unification of the German Empire, the town gates of Frankfort have been taken down , the market gardens have been covered by its expanding suburbs , and the smoke from the tall chimneys of many factories hangs over the country far away . Its population has doubled , and its wealth has increased in proportion , for its position is unrivalled as it is now the centre of a vast network of railways . But what it has gained in size it has lost in picturesqueness, and in another decade , few if any of the older portions of the town will be left . The once narrow and tortuous streets are rapidly disappearing , and the jerry-builder erects colossal square mansions , devoid of taste ,-being either overladen with ornament or else barrack-like in their plainness- on the site of the antique , high-gabled houses which delighted the eye with their curiously shaped bay windows , wrought iron balconies , and many overhanging storeys. The Palace of the Elector of Hesse in the Zeil - the principal thoroughfare - has been converted into shops , while the Hotel de Russie - once too a palace - and the old Post Office , have had to make way for the buildings of to-day . The Römer Platz , where stands the Cathedral , still stands untouched , and the tourist can form some slight conception of the Frankfort I have known from its quaintly fashioned houses which are all windows ; being thus provided , however, not for the sake of light and air , but to enable the visitors on the occasions of the coronations,to

enjoy the best possible view of the festivities and pageants which then took place .

The first street to be doomed by the present mania for sanitation and improvement, was the old 'Jew's Street' ; which, in former times was closed at night with heavy chains , no Jew being permitted to leave it after dark . The house of my ancestors , alone , has been respected, but as it stood in the way when the street was being pulled down to be widened , it was carefully taken to pieces to be re-erected farther back . It now looks strangely incongruous beside its new and gaudy neighbours, and an erroneous impression is conveyed of its former appearance and proportions . Though outwardly one house , it is really divided into two , only one-half having been inhabited by my ancestors . My Great-Grandmother died in it , a centenarian , in I849 , and though she long survived her husband , and her sons and daughters were living amid luxurious surroundings , she abided all her life in the small , dingy dwelling in fulfilment of a promise to her husband that she would never leave the home of their youth . I can still see her , resting on a couch in her dark little sitting-room,folded in a thick , white shawl, her deeply-furrowed face enclosed in a full and heavily-ribboned white cap , and a genial smile beaming from her bright eyes as she bade me partake of some favourite small aniseed cakes.

The Zeil was at all times a lively street , and is still famous for its shops and hotels. Its length is about that of the Haymarket , but, children having no sense of proportion ,to me it appeared a thoroughfare of extraordinary dimensions and

the most imposing character . As my Great-Uncle Anselm resided in it and as I was taken to see him every Saturday, I often had the satisfaction of leaving the silent quarter of the town in which we lived , for the brilliant and animated Zeil , of which I never tired. At one end , facing the Rossmarkt and the Hotel d'Angleterre , stood , and I believe still stands, the old Guard's House, which was alternately occupied by Austrian , Prussian , and Bavarian soldiers , and which was built of red sandstone with a richly carved pediment representing military trophies. At the corner of the Fahrgasse at the other end stood another guard-house, the town prison ; a narrow one-storeyed edifice which I never passed without a shiver , for I could see the pale faces of the prisoners peering through the iron-barred windows , and hear , or perhaps fancied I heard, their coarse laughter and savage cries. Our business offices are still situated in the Fahrgasse.

My Father's house was then in the most fashionable quarter of the town , at the corner of the Mainzer Strasse , where it forms a sharp angle.It has now long been levelled to the ground , and a street built over its site . It was a large mansion with a courtyard and garden , and opposite were the stables , which my Grandfather had stocked with fine Arab horses. The head coachman was an old Frenchman named Michel , who had been a soldier in the Grande Armée, and had gone through the disastrous Russian campaign . He had had some of his toes frozen during the memorable passage of the Beresina. There were few carriages to be seen in the streets of Frankfort in those days - chiefly lumbering old coaches and chariots - but there

was no lack of four-wheeled cabs . Most objectionable conveyances they were , the horses were slow, overworked and underbred brutes , while the drivers were surly , il-conditioned boors. There was a great sensation when we drove out in the first brougham seen in the town , which my Mother had imported from London . It was a delightful improvement on the heavy chariot.

Frankfort was in many respects behind the times , considering its wealth and its situation , for its inhabitants were slow to adopt the innovations and refinements of Paris and London , being content to live unostentatiously as their fathers had done . Sea fish,for instance, was an unknown delicacy , and game was a great luxury in those days at Frankfort. The comparatively late introduction of railways may have accounted for the somewhat primitive simplicity of the worthy burghers. The first railway built in Germany was from Fulda to Nuremberg , the second from Frankfort to Höchst, a distance of about ten miles . I was present at the opening ceremony when the line was extended in I844, and I remember seeing a locomotive called ~~the~~ Lightning , garnished with evergreens , steaming out of the station . Although the railways were rapidly extended after that time , I can recall being aroused one night by the arrival of my parents on their return from Paris , and being told that it had taken them five days to accomplish the journey in their own carriage . This carriage accompanied us for many years when we travelled. It was fitted on the outside with a place for the heavy luggage,while inside there were huge pockets for provisions, and a net on the roof for books. It

was placed on a truck where the railway was at hand , and hoisted on a steamer when we went down the Rhine or crossed the Channel . We children always preferred remaining in it on the water to being stuffed into a cabin . Stage-coaches there were none in Germany . The common herd had to avail themselves of the post or the diligence , in which they sat packed like herrings , unless they went with some carrier. The well-to-do travelled in their own carriages with postilions and postboys, and a courier who rode in front to order the horses at the next relay . I had but one experience of this mode of locomotion , when a very small child. My Mother and I were proceeding from Paris to London , but all I can recollect is , traversing the Bois de Boulogne - then a real wood and unconscious of its future glories - and halting at a relay where I indulged in some excellent cake while our team was being changed . A gay picture it was - the big , heavily laden coach , the steaming horses, the high-booted postilions with their glossy hats and long horns , and the jovial courier.

Some few years later I had an opportunity of seeing a travelling party in a carriage under far more memorable circumstances. The Queen and the Prince Consort, then Prince Albert, were expected at Frankfort. My Mother , who had remained English to the backbone and whose feelings of loyalty to her former sovereign never waned, sent my Brother and I at dawn up the Mainzer Road , along which the august travellers had to proceed, and told us to give a good cheer as soon as they came in sight . At about eight a.m. our patience was rewarded; the equipage appeared , we waved our caps , shouted and hurrahed

so frantically that the Queen and the Prince were roused from their sound slumbers , looked out of the window of the carriage and smiled at us more or less gratefully.

In the early years of my life I was entirely wrapped up in my home , and my thoughts hardly ever ventured beyond its narrow horizon . My Father was a high-minded and cultured man, devoted to his work, a keen sportsman, fond of literature and art, of good talk and whist; but he was not without some peculiarities , for though he was very kindhearted , he took only a feeble interest in his children . For Mrs Henderson, our nurse, I had little affection or regard, probably because she spoilt me too much and was always choking me with her kisses. I requited her by practising on her every conceivable ill-mannered joke. The one I repeated most effectively to my satisfaction was to pour an unnameable fluid into her tea, and then to scream with delight ~~at the table~~ at the faces she made while gulping it down .

Children , like dogs , feel instinctively who it is that genuinely loves them. All my love went to my Mother, who indeed sacrificed the whole of her short life (we lost her in I859) to the care and tuition of her young family. I could hardly bear to be out of her sight ; my happiest moments were when I was recovering from an illness and she nursed me and stayed at my bedside, telling me stories of which I never tired. My Mother was my guardian angel, the one being around whom my existence revolved; yet, and I confess it with shame and remorse , I often behaved outrageously by sulking when she scolded me , however much I deserved it.

Most children whose conditions of life were similar to those in which I was placed , have much the same kind of existence and much the same experiences. The surroundings may vary and , according to the nature , the qualities and the defects of the child , his future will be differently affected by his early training . Trite as the statement is , too much stress cannot be laid on the fact that the idiosyncrasies of a child should be studied by those who are interested in his future welfare. When we arrive at maturity we are apt to ignore how intensely acute are the feelings of a child - its feelings of joy and pain - especially when he is of an emotional and sensitive disposition . We all look back with the same fondness to the hours we spent in the arms of our Mothers, and with those , be it brothers, sisters or playmates who initiated us into our first amusements , or with our masters who guided our first steps and kindled our first thoughts. We also look back with the same regret to the poor return we made for the care and affection lavished on us , but at the sametime we are too apt to forget that the effect which our early tuition has made on our character is permanent.

As soon as I was able to read I devoured books with insatiable voracity ; fairy-tales first , then romances and novels. Hoffman's tales and others of a similar kind increased the nervousness and dreaminess of my disposition , which lasted until I was well on in my teens. I fully believed that a narrow white passage which led from the nursery to the schoolroom was tenanted by fairies , and that the ghosts of the dead hovered over their graves in the churchyard , past which I

never drove without deep dread. The sweep , a tall , spare, middle-aged man, always covered with soot and who continued many years in the performance of his duties ,inspired me with indescribable fear . When I heard him rumbling in the chimney I shuddered all over , and when I met him out of doors I fled to the other side of the street. He was a supernatural being in my timid young eyes, for he was as black from head to foot as if he had emerged directly from the infernal regions , and his eyes gleamed horribly. No wonder I recoiled from this ghostly apparition for I was warned that if I misbehaved myself , the sweep would come and take me away . A strange sensation of awe crept over me too when the lamplighter lit the sparse oil lamps in the street, and the melancholy voice of the watchman chaunted the hour . Then I turned with a sense of relief from the window where I had long watched , and hurried to my Mother's room , there to nestle at her feet while she worked at some tapestry chairs. I still have a settee made by her hands, in the designing of which she consulted me .

Soon after my Mother had taught me to spell I was handed over to my Sisters' French governess, and the family tutor, Dr Creuznach a native of Frankfort. He was an undersized, squat , very plain man,but as gentle as a dove , and having the knack of inspiring his pupils with a taste for the classical knowledge which he himself possessed in an eminent degree. He also instructed us in the first principles of electricity,and constructed a somewhat primitive but yet very effective battery which my eldest Sister played with , to the great annoyance of her visitors , whom she insisted on subjecting to electric

shocks. A young French footman named Gustave, who had been engaged to wait on my Brother and me, - he passed afterwards into the service of my Father as valet and remained with him until his death - was thought capable of sustaining a severe shock , but it was so very severe that , to our great alarm , he was knocked all out of time by it .

I was about nine years old when Dr Creuznach left to be married . M. Monton , a handsome young Frenchman,took his place , but proved the worst tutor we ever had , for he left us to our own devices as often as he could , in order to gallivant about the town where he formed an attachment for a young lady. Eventually he transferred his affections to my cousins' French governess, and then parted with us to marry and settle with her in Paris. He afterwards tried his hand at various speculations - journalism among others - but invariably with disastrous results . However, there was no harm in the man , and I kept up my relations with him until his death .

Though we had plenty of holidays and amusements no children could have been more strictly and simply brought up than we were. We had to rise and turn into bed early, to learn lessons of every kind , and we were not spared punishment when our record was unsatisfactory . Great severity was shown in the matter of food ; none but the plainest was allowed , and that by no means in abundance . We had a frugal dinner at one; tea and a slice of cold meat was all that was allowed for supper, except when on many an evening the goodnatured French governess supplemented it with some of her portion . Being a fast grower , always ravenous and inordinately greedy , I often

induced our German nursemaid Anna , to whom I was much devoted, to procure me some Frankfort sausages , which were justly famous , and pilfered in the stillroom regardless of the retribution that awaited me when I was found out .

I was not very strong , and consequently not an adept at the sports which my Mother encouraged me to pursue. We fenced , and practised gymnastics , we had our ponies, in the summer went swimming in the river , and in the winter we skated with our friends on the low-lying meadows which had been flooded by the autumnal rains . For these friends , however, I cared much less than for the members of my own family , into whose games I brought an earnestness unequalled by most children. I remember , though then quite a child , that in these games , for which our gardens and courtyard afforded ample scope, we were often assisted by our Father's then greatest friend, General Ferning , a Spaniard - after whom I believe I was called. He once nearly led us into a severe scrape. He had given us a toy cannon , which small as it was could be fired. To amuse us he loaded it , but charged it so heavily that when it was set off it exploded in our midst , though fortunately without inflicting any injury . General Ferning accompanied my Father to Cairo one July , where my Father's excellent constitution enabled him to bear the heat , which , however, proved too much for old Ferning who succumbed to dysentery . I shall never forget our excitement on unpacking and unrolling a mummy , which my Father had brought home from his visit to the land of the Pharaohs. We expected to find a treasure trove in the case , and were not altogether disappointed.

The mummy was that of a priestess , and contained a beautifully painted systrum , as well as a small gold lachrymarium or paint bottle , which are now in the possession of my elder Brother. My Father gave the mummy and its cases to the Frankfort Museum , where they are still to be seen .

Belonging to a cosmopolitan family and receiving a cosmopolitan education , I was often taken on visits to my relations in Paris and London . My first recollection of Paris is of a park where a tall, sad-looking, middle-aged lady stood conversing with my Mother. The park was St. Cloud , and the lady Queen Amélie , the Consort of Louis Phillippe. My next recollection is of Suresnes , my Grandfather's country house near the village of that name on the Seine, where my nurse often took me to feed the tame deer in an enclosure in the grounds. During the Revolution of I848 this house was burnt down , and the deer were tortured to death by the Paris mob. This was the only occasion on which any of my relatives in Paris or elsewhere have had to suffer any personal injury from revolutionists or anarchists .

The Revolution of I848 was a critical time for my French relatives . Some fanatics burst into the office of my Great-uncle demanding of him that he should divide his fortune among them . " At what figure do you estimate my fortune? " he asked them, and one of the men replied at haphazard " At thirty-five millions ." " And how many of you are there ?" he further asked . " We are ten ," was the reply. " You wish me to act fairly, do you not ? Very well, as there are thirty five millions of inhabitants in France I should , in order to act

according to your desire , give one franc to every person in the country. Here are ten francs for your share! " - The men laughed and withdrew.

I have a more distinct recollection of a juvenile fancy dress ball at my grandparent's house, on which occasion I was costumed as a powdered marquis, my Sister Louisa as a Marquise, and my Brother as a mousquetaire with a fierce moustache , of which he was very proud. I trundled my hoop in the Tuileries, drove in a goat-carriage in the Champs Elysées,and watched Guignol the French Punch and Judy ,as children still do.Almost in spite of myself I was often attracted to the Passage des Panoramas , which my Brother convinced me was haunted by a demon he had christened Casparino , and whom I fully expected - half wished,half feared - would rise out of the iron gratings in the floor. Then we saw on a Shrove Tuesday the procession of the 'boeuf gras' , received a call from the occupants of the car, and drove on the Boulevards to see the masks , for in those days the outdoor festivities of the Carnival were still in favour with all classes. But though the gaieties of Paris were a welcome change from the quiet routine of my Frankfort life , I never really enjoyed myself in the French capital, for I had no companions of my own age and was unmercifully teased by my cousins who belonged to an older generation ; while I was too young to be admitted to or to have appreciated the Salon of my Aunt Betty, Baroness James.

My Aunt was one of the most accomplished women of a highly accomplished time . A most brilliant and fascinating talker , she received for many years with unrivalled grace and

consummate tact most of the eminent statesmen, lawyers, men of letters,artists, and beautiful and clever women of the day . One of her constant visitors was General Changarnier, with whom she kept up a daily correspondence after he was banished by Napoleon III. I have heard from the few persons who were privileged to see her letters to him , and which she unfortunately destroyed when they were returned to her after his death, that they contained not only a most faithful and interesting record of all the passing political ,literary, and social events of the day , but were written in a style which Madame de Sevigné might not have disclaimed. My Aunt was as much beloved as she was esteemed in Paris. Heine pays her a graceful tribute in his memoirs, for when the poor stricken poet lay on his bed of sick ness she often ministered to his wants and charmed away his sufferings with her sympathy and conversation .

But to return to my personal reminiscences . The attractions of Paris , as I have said, were small,and they paled into insignificance beside those of 'old' England. In my earliest childhood England was already the land of my dreams, the goal to which tended myconception of all earthly bliss. My first recollection of the country I have now long made my home, is of Gunnersbury , my Grandmother's villa near Acton , where I was spoilt beyond all measure , not by my Grandmother only but by my Uncles and Aunts . I revelled in the society of my cousins. Once I was taken to see the famous glasshouses of Mrs Lawrence, the mother of Sir Trevor, and they much impressed me for at Frankfort 'glass' was then unknown. How greatly I appreciated the contents of the Gunnersbury 'glass'can hardly be understood

now, when South African , Australian and American peaches , and Brazilian pines are as common as gooseberries. Once too I drove , late in the afternoon , to London in my Uncle's private cab , sitting between him and my Mother, and stared at the endless succession of market gardens , which with the flaring red and bright blue lamps in the chemists windows largely monopolised my attention . I remember ,too, that when I was but five years of age I tried to assist in the rescue of my cousin Evelina who had fallen into the pond, and was hunted,to my indescribable terror, by the llama in the park , which I had foolishly excited and provoked, from which however I escaped by flying as fast as my little legs could carry me and scrambling back over the railings.

My first clear perception of London was not until I85I when my Brother and I were allowed to proceed to England for the opening of the Great Exhibition; and when we were the guests of my Uncle Mayer at I07 Piccadilly, my Grandmother having died in the preceding year . We shared the same small bedroom, and quarrelled and fought to our heart's content,much to the amusement of our Uncle , who surprised us one morning standing in our nightshirts on our beds hurling blankets and pillows at each other. We were sent to all the sights of London; at the Bank a bank note for a million was put in our hands, we climbed into the ball of St Paul's,fed the elephants and bears at the Zoo, and were shown the Abbey and the Guildhall- but none of them equalled in interest the opening of the Great Exhibition in Hyde Park . At first we were bewildered by the huge crowd , and but for the assistance of a policeman I should

have been crushed to death at the turnstiles. But we found an excellent place in one of the galleries and had a good view of the Queen , in her pink satin gown and her jewels and feathers, walking between ~~the~~ Prince ~~Consort~~ Albert in uniform and the Prince of Wales and Prince Alfred in highland costume and preceded by the Duke of Wellington . There have been many international exhibitions since I85I on a far more important and elaborate scale , but none so impressive and beautiful . Sir Joseph Paxton's crystal building was the first of its kind , and a more aerial or graceful structure could not be imagined or equalled. Two stately old elms towered into the dome, where , between them , fountains of china threw up their sparkling waters. Close by in a glass case was the Koh-i-noor, then a huge uncut stone , and the centre of attraction . Machinery was still in the early stages of its development, and the then novel printing presses and numerous steam contrivances provided endless amusement.

Yet much as I enjoyed the Exhibition and an occasional evening at the Opera, I delighted most in the society of my cousins; and of all the recollections of my childhood not the least happy have been associated with them . My Neapolitan Great-uncle and his wife were often at Frankfort and their daughter Charlotte who was married to my Uncle Lionel , the head of our London firm , occasionally came with her children to pay them her filial respects . Our English cousins who were physically and mentally far in advance of their years , were accomplished , good looking and high spirited, and realized in my eyes the very ideal of perfection . I was doubly delighted

when my cousins visited Frankfort , for besides the brightness and mirth their presence brought into our home ,entertainments were given in their honour,picnics, and dances , and displays of fireworks - at which the crackers which fizzed off between my legs caused me no small alarm .

An event which I welcomed almost as much as these visits was the Fair , which was and which still is held twice a year at Frankfort , at Easter and in the autumn. For many years , while Germany was a congeries of small independent states divided from each other by separate laws,customs duties, tariffs, and impassable roads, the great Fairs, those of Frankfort and Leipsig especially, were the chief trade marts of the commercial world ,at which foreign as well as native merchants transacted their business, and where showmen came from all parts of Europe and the East , drawing crowds to the wonders they exhibited. The first elephant seen in Frankfort was at the Fair of I773. The Fairs suffered much from the introduction of railways , and though they are still held their commercial importance has now altogether waned. In my childhood they were still of considerable moment, and many a household availed of them to lay in a fresh stock of linen and cloth and to replenish its stores , while an untold variety of articles which can now be purchased on the spot or imported was only to be obtained on these occasions.

All the open spaces of the city and the long range of the quays were covered with booths ; many of which contained sweetmeats, gingerbread cakes of the quaintest designs ,toys and fancy wares of all kinds , while others displayed excellent textile goods and articles for domestic use. There seemed to

be almost as many shows as there were booths, for the music-hall was still unthought of , and it was only at fairs that wandering minstrels, athletes, tumblers , conjurors , and jugglers, trained dogs and monkeys and birds and menageries , made their appearance . In these days of easy locomotion and widespread luxury , when every facility is given to every class in every country to indulge in every kind of cheap and good amusement , it is impossible to imagine how great was our excitement and gratification at witnessing the sights of the Fair. There was a kind of play I then saw which impressed me fearfully because of its gruesome and mysterious character, and to this hour I could not explain how it was enacted. It was the pantomimic representation of an ancient trial . The principal actor was sentenced to death , he laid his head on the block , and it was struck off by the executioner with an axe, and held up to the audience while the blood poured from the body . But of all the attractions none equalled the circus . London already had its Astley's but in Germany a circus was only to be seen at the Fairs, and no words of mine could express my ecstacy at the antics of the clowns .

At that time our house was one of the cheeriest and most popular in Frankfort , for both my Parents liked seeing their friends at home , and appreciated the conversation of clever and accomplished persons whom they welcomed under their roof. As my Sisters grew up my Mother was anxious to enlarge the scope of her hospitality , but my Father though he was partial to his rubber of whist and often dined out , disliked society in the general sense of the word and as he advanced in years

he gradually developed a thorough aversion to receptions of all kinds. When we settled in Vienna in the 'fifties' no amount of coaxing could ever induce him to give a dance , and a stiff dinner now and then was the utmost concession he made to my Mother's requests. Even in the 'forties' the craftiest diplomacy had to be employed by my Mother and Sisters to obtain his consent to a ball, from which at the last minute he would often plead some excuse to absent himself. Yet he was still comparatively amenable to his social duties and allowed receptions of various kinds. Though half-a-century has elapsed since those days , the impression these receptions made on my mind was so deep at the time that I could mention most of the names of the ladies who attended them ,and describe not only their appearance but their gowns and the turbans that some of them still wore.

The fashionable dinner hour was five , but my parents when alone dined later , and the evening parties began about nine . To reward me when I was a good boy I was allowed to come down for a short while into the drawing-room, and I enjoyed nothing so much as looking at the smart folk , while indulging my taste for ices and sweetmeats which , after the German custom , were handed round on trays.

Baroness Vrints, sister of Count Buol sometime Prime Minister of Austria , was the leader of Frankfort society. A tall, dark, gaunt woman with a voice like a turkey when it guggles , and a swelling in her neck like the wattle of that bird, she was inclined to assume superior airs , but she was clever amiable and hospitable . Both she and her eldest

daughter Baroness Charles Bethmann were near neighbours of ours. Baron Vrints was as dull as his wife was the reverse,and on that account perhaps Baron Dörnberg was never seen out of her company , though as far as I could judge he was not particularly interesting either. Baron Dörnberg was'Post Master General' of Frankfort , which in common with all the post offices in Germany then belonged to Prince Thurn and Taxis , to whom they yielded a colossal revenue.

Baroness Vrints' unmarried daughter Nélie was the belle of the town and all the young Attachés were at her feet -none more devotedly than Mr X. of the English Legation , to whom in defiance of her Mother's wish , she plighted her troth . The Baroness considered him too impecunious and of not sufficiently high rank to aspire to the hand of her daughter and finally forbade him the house. He subsequently became accredited as Minister to a Foreign Court, and Miss Nélie remained single for many a long year , eventually bestowing herself on a Hungarian gentleman who was not much wealthier or nobler than her former suitor. Miss Nélie had a graceful figure,golden hair,fair complexion and blue eyes ; charms of which she was not unconscious. She looked , or rather imagined she looked particularly well on a horse , and my eldest Sister often went out riding with her, both girls being carefully dressed in the height of the then , but now obsolete fashion ,which Queen Victoria's portrait by Winterhalter has rendered historic and familiar.

I could give an account of many of the other notabilities of the day , but their fame was so transient that it would be futile to give them even a short notice . I prefer to

turn at once to the distinguished strangers who passed through or stayed in the town , of whom there were many . The best known was Lady Jersey , the famous and great Lady Jersey - famous for her pride , and great for the position she occupied at home . No mother was more ambitious for the matrimonial establishment of her daughters and none was doomed to greater disappointment. Lady Clementina Villiers whose beautiful pale face and golden ringlets are immortalised in keepsakes died unmarried ; and Lady Sarah , for whom Lady Jersey found a Prince - Prince Esterhazy -never obtained a secure footing among the aristocracy of Vienna who could not forgive her for being the granddaughter of a banker. To humour Lady Jersey's aristocratic leanings my Mother invited her to a banquet at which every guest was a prince . Of princes there was no lack for as I have already said , Frankfort was surrounded by small principalities in addition to which there were many mediatised German princelings , the Wittgensteins,Leiningens, Löwensteins, Höhenlöhes, Ysenbergs and others , who often made Frankfort their home for a time or took it on the way .

I have no personal recollection of Lady Jersey on this particular occasion for I was then barely out of my cradle,but I well remember her and Lady Clementina when they came some years later on their way to Homburg and dined at our house. When dinner was over Lady Jersey asked to be shown to a bedroom where she was attended by our German nursemaid Anna. We had been told of the stateliness and pride of the fine English Countess , and were vastly amused when Anna informed us that she was ordered to raise and shake her heavy gown and ample pettitcoats while sonorous , trumpet-like sounds issued from

the depths of their folds.

Several foreign families were attracted to Frankfort by the cheapness of living and the educational resources of the town . The English as a matter of course were predominant. Amongst these was Lord Pollington , now Lord Mexborough, whose wife was a sister of the late Lord Orford , and their son Master Savile, a plain and uncouth youngster with whom I tried hard but never succeded in being on good terms. Nature had lavished her graces on Lady Pollington , but she was a victim to the terrible passion against which Sir Wilfrid Lawson thunders , and which degraded and brought her to an untimely end. We formed a close intimacy with Lady O'Donnell, a portly Irish dame, and her children who were about the same age as my Sisters and Brother. We shared the same lessons and amusements and though circumstances eventually drove us apart, we have all retained a grateful recollection of those happy days. The eldest daughter , Miss O'Donnell, who was shy and rather plain was kept in the background by her somewhat worldly and very Hibernian mother.

Of the two Miss O'Hara's , Lady O'Donnell's children by her second marriage , Fanny married Mr Hozier and her son now sits in parliament . Many years later I had the pleasure of enjoying her hospitality in London , but she has now been taken from this world. Robert O'Hara was at school at Frankfort, a bright and clever youth who prospered and made a brilliant career at the parliamentary bar ; he too is no more. But the pearl of the family was Rose , dear, lovely , delightful Rose, no woman has ever been worthier of that name, or more than she

had the beauty and charm - but alas! the ephemeral life -of the flower whose name she bore . When Lady O'Donnell took up her abode in London Rose O'Hara became the belle of the season .The Irish beauty she was called ; she was tall, graceful, auburn haired, with the creamiest complexion , and last though not least , with the sweetest disposition . I have always wondered that of her many admirers of high social position not one ever came forward to ask for her hand , and regretted that so ideal a being should have been wasted on a dull Scottish laird , Mr Forbes of Callender , in whose highland fastness she withered and passed away in the year I865.

My Mother belonged to a Committee of ladies called the "Nah Verein - Sewing Committee - who assembled on certain evenings at each other's houses where they made garments, knitted stockings and muffetees for the poor, while they drank tea, ate ices and cakes , and recorded the latest news. It was generally assumed that these meetings were intolerably dull, but as they long endured and were patronised by many ladies both young and old , probably they were not so tiresome as the gentlemen ,who were excluded from them, assumed. The first entertainment of a livelier kind which I can recollect was some tableaux vivants in which I took part. I was attired as miniature footman and thereby incurred the derision of our lacqueys. I had to hold a tray containing a tea-set,and to my everlasting dismay and the amusement of the whole company, I dropped the tray at the critcal moment and was well laughed at for my awkwardness. The next was a concert at which the great tenor Rubini sang- a puny little man with a lovely voice - and soon after this , a

party at which Rachel recited. I can still see the great tragedienne standing in the centre of the drawing room very plainly dressed,and wearing a black veil over her auburn hair. She recited a scene from memory from Racine's Esther, while her brother Felix read his part from a book . I was too young to appreciate the way she rendered the lines but the tenderness of her rich mellow voice still lingers in my memory, and the wonderful expression of her deep brown eyes will haunt me as long as I live. I was not allowed to see her act and was terribly jealous of my Brother when he came home raving about her performance of Phèdre.

All the famous artists of Europe came 'starring' to Frankfort, foremost among them Jenny Lind. I was taken to see her in 'The Daughter of the Regiment' , and I can remember the pink silk gown she wore as well as the fact that I thought her very plain , but alas! the dulcet notes of the 'Swedish Nightingale' were wasted on my childish ears. The Countess Rossi, better known as Madame Sonntag appeared at the theatre some little time later . She was a handsome and very ladylike woman and was'received' in society where she behaved with much dignity. My Mother told me that the only proof she gave of having sprung from the middle classes was the fashion she had retained of eating with her knife.

It was a red-letter day with me when my parents gave a ball. The invitation list was made up from the cards that had been left. Woe to him or her who had not left a pasteboard !- for in matters of etiquette Frankfort was as much a stickler as any European capital , and the non-return of a card was an

affront that led to interminable warngling . Great was my delight when the lacqueys donned their state liveries, but the kitchen was my favourite region , and there I prowled about seriously interfering with Louis our Chef and his helpmates who were preparing the supper. I watched the dancing from behind a tall screen , and received at times a sound box on the ear for making a noise or for venturing from my concealment.On one of these occasions I saw the tall and imposing figure of the then Prince of Prussia - the future Emperor William .

An amusing incident occurred at one of the dances my Mother gave about that time. Amongst her acquaintances was ~~the~~ Count Szechenyi, then an Attaché at the Austrian Legation, and recently I believe Austrian Amabssador at Berlin . He was an excellent musician,and my Sister Louisa who was an equally good musician and had a wonderful ear and a most retentive memory begged him to let her have a polka he had just composed and had played to her, so that it might be performed at our next dance. But whether from diffidence or pride , he refused to accede to her request. My Sister, however, would not be baulked, and as she remembered every note of the tune she sent for the bandmaster , played it over to him and made him take it down .Shortly afterwards the Count had the questionable satisfaction of dancing with my Sister to the strains of his own polka.

For many years my parents had but one residence , their town house, and when they wanted a change they went to France or England . In the hot summer months , and the summer at Frankfort is often terribly hot , we children were sent to the Neuhof , our farm in the vicinity of the town , where rooms of

the most primitive simplicity were prepared for us . Fresh milk and cream and good butter were not easily procured at Frankfort , and to remedy the deficiency my Mother set up a dairy at the Neuhof and imported a Devonshire dairymaid.In the orchard adjoining the buildings five small plots of ground were fenced in and laid out as gardens for my three Sisters , my Brother and myself ; and to these we attended with much zeal and gravity , though were it not for the assistance of the gardener it may be questioned whether they would have produced anything but weeds.

Early in the'forties' my Great-uncle Anselm , with whom my Father was a great favourite, gave him twenty acres of land, a slice from his own farm some two or three miles outside the town , and my Grandfather provided the funds to erect a house upon it . A French architect made the designs for the villa, and the foundation stone was laid in I845 amid great rejoicings. Newspapers and coins were duly laid in the stone , which we all struck with a mallet , even my younger Brother Albert , then only a baby in arms . We first took up our residence at the Grünebourg, as the villa was called from the name of the farm, in I847 and soon we all loved the place . My Mother who was a great adept at gardening took no small pleasure and pride in laying out the grounds, planting young chestnut trees on each side of the road which led from the farm past our gates towards the town . The twenty acres were made into flower gardens and orchards, with an aviary , and a pond which was stocked with carp and adorned with ducks. There was a mound which we called 'the mountain' in a remote corner containing

the ice-house, and close by were enclosures for a wild antelope and a tame deer that my Father had brought from Egypt. It was all on a small scale but to us it seemed enormous.

The house,however, was very large and its proportions were perfect . It was built of red stone with cream coloured panels somewhat like the Duke of Nassau's castle at Biebrich on the Rhine, and was the first private house in that style- since then it has been copied by the score. Internally it was decorated in the French Louis XV manner, then an altogether new departure from the fashion of the day ; an innovation , too, which was soon repeatedly imitated. My Mother had taken the idea from a Pompadour bed she had seen in Paris.

We highly appreciated the fresh air of our rural surr- oundings, and the gardens which yielded excellent strawberries, cherries and plums and provided ample scope for enjoyment. But the farm which stood close to the grounds was my principal attraction . Farming is carried on in Germany very differ- ently from England , because of the exigencies of the climate. As the cattle are allowed to graze during the hot summer months only and are kept indoors the greater part of the year they are sumptuously housed , and their stables are a great feature. They are milked indoors , the dairy is not set apart as in England but is one with the rest of the buildings, which be - sides stabling for horses, carts and implements of all sorts, generally includes a distillery . In the Grünebourg a strong alcoholic liquor called Schnaps , not unlike the Russian Vodki, was distilled from potatoes, and of this beverage the peasan- try were inordinately fond. In the centre of the farmyard was a

well surrounded by lime trees from which water was drawn up in buckets , and in front of it was a huge dungheap , valued by the bailiff as the apple of his eye. The farmyard also swarmed with poultry which were allowed to mix promiscuously irrespective of breed , as the fowls were only kept to lay eggs and were not fit to be eaten . The farm buildings formed ~~three~~ four sides of a square , and the ~~fourth~~ Third consisted of the bailiff's house which looked on the yard and the chestnut avenue.

The yard was in a perpetual state of bustle and animation , and long remained my favourite playground. I could see how the cows were fed or milked , how the butter was churned , or the Schnaps was distilled. Carts came in heavily-laden ,the hay was stored away in the lofts, the corn was threshed. Then the bull had to be teazed, mice and rats had to be trapped,and cats - the object of my special aversion - hunted by my dogs , much to the annoyance of the bailiff who prized them highly for they destroyed the vermin . But he always ended by forgiving me and then treated me to thick slices of black bread and butter.

The Grünebourg though near Frankfort might have been situated many miles away , and was to all intents and purposes quite in the country. Since then great changes have taken place . The stripling chestnuts have grown into a stately avenue, the grassland which surrounded the garden has been fenced in , planted and transformed into a park ; the farm has been pulled down and ranges of glasshouses erected on its site . But for the one side which looks towards the Taunus over long streches of grass and arable land , the park is surrounded by the

all-absorbing town the view from the terrace on the relatively distant spires of the city, the uplands beyond, and the great wood, is marred by huge erections of brick and plaster; the quiet lanes have been turned into public highways, and instead of the songs of the labourers on their way home from their work in the fields the clatter of wheels now breaks the silence of the summer evening. The resources of the city are brought within close reach of the Grünebourg , but the charm of country life with its perhaps idle and trivial yet ever-varying and genial pursuits , has vanished for ever.

My Mother gave many entertainments at the Grünebourg - breakfasts, dinners, dances - and received there many of the foreign notabilities who were passing through Frankfort. Of these I may mention three. First : Lord Lansdowne , the grand-father of the present Secretary for War. I can recollect seeing him at breakfast , a small , unpretentious, middle-aged man , for whose benefit the table was covered with fancy bread and tea-cakes of every conceivable kind, for which he was known to have a special liking. The second was Lady Douro , the present Dowager Duchess of Wellington , then in the heyday of her youth and beauty , but her statuesque charms completely overawed me. The third was Prince Lichnowsky, one of the best-looking and most popular men of the day, who soon afterwards met with a tragic end. He was riding out with the Austrian General ~~ARP~~ [2] just as the Revolution of '48 had broken out, and they fell in with a band of insurgents. The General was shot dead on the spot but poor Lichnowsky was dragged from his horse, beaten with clubs and terribly mutilated. He was taken to the house of

Baroness Moritz Bethmann where he died in great agony.

The Revolution at Frankfort was a shortlived episode of three days , which we spent at the Grünebourg without being in the least molested ; and but for the information we received we might have been in blissful ignorance of the wild proceedings in our immediate neighbourhood. My Father was in Vienna at the time but my Mother was with us. Fearing that my Great-uncle Anselm might have come to harm she went alone into the town, made her way past the barricades to his house, and finding him safe and sound , quietly walked home again .

I need not concern myself in these pages with the political events of '48 , which belong to history. It is well known that a German Parliament was convened at Frankfort, and was opened on the I8th of May under the presidency of Baron Gagern; that the Archduke John was appointed Reichswerweser - Viceroy of the Realm - and made his official entrance into the town on July IIth. We witnessed the pageant from my Great-uncle's house in the Zeil and were much impressed by the fine marching order and the white uniforms of the Austrian soldiers, who wore sprigs of evergreen in their shakos as an emblem of peace. The Archduke had married morganatically an Austrian postmaster's daughter , whom the Emperor of Austria created Countess Meran. They had an only son - Count Meran- with whom I formed a kind of friendship. We had the same cut of features and the same figure , and when years later I went to live in Vienna I was constantly mistaken for him . In shops I was addressed by his name , and at the play his friends came into my box expecting to meet him . He married an Austrian lady and died soon after.

President Gagern had a daughter with whom we became acquainted, but I know nothing of her later career , or whether she is still in the land of the living.

That same year - I848- Lord Cowley was appointed English Minister at Frankfort, and Lady Cowley who was of a bright, kind and hospitable disposition ,invited us to the dances she gave for her children . I never spent more enjoyable evenings. Her Twelfth Night dances live most gratefully in my recollection . At supper a large cake was brought in and was cut in slices for us by our amiable hostess. There were two beans in the cakeand those who got them were proclaimed King and Queen and were attired in regal costume , while most of the other children were made knights and dames and were dressed accordingly. A procession was formed , we marched through the rooms, and we danced for the rest of the evening. Lady Cowley artfully contrived that young Meran should get one bean and Mdlle de Gagern the other , so that consequently they were proclaimed King and Queen. Lady Cowley threw herself heart and soul into the fun , dancing as merrily with the children as if she had been one of ourselves.

Four years later , much to our regret, Lord Cowley at the special request of the Emperor Napoleon was appointed British Ambassador at Paris, and was replaced at Frankfort by Sir Alexander Malet. It would be well nigh impossible to find two more dissimilar couples in appearance and manner than the the late Minister and his wife and the new Minister and his. Lord Cowley was the type of aristocratic breeding but cold and formal, while Lady Cowley was the most sociable and winsome of

women . Sir Alexander was cheery and jovial , fond of a good dinner and a rubber of whist , while Lady Malet was a grey haired, serious minded literary woman . She had written a novel called 'Violet' , the authorhsip of which, however, she would not acknowledge, and she expended most of her affection on her many dogs which accompanied her on her drives in a closed brougham . Edward Malet , their eldest son - till lately Ambassador at Berlin - was then a boy at school , and he and I have remained on intimate terms ever since .

Sir Edward , I believe , was appointed to Berlin at the special request of Prince Bismarck , who had been Prussian Minister at Frankfort at the time that Sir Alexander Malet represented Breat Britain at the German Confederation , and for whom he had conceived a great liking. Of Prince , then plain M. Von Bismarck, I have but the vaguest recollection , and though he probably came to our house I cannot remember his having done so . But an anecdote characteristic of the man of blood and iron which I then heard, has remained in my mind. The German Confederation was presided over by the Austrian Minister, who to show his superiority over his colleagues indulged in a frequent cigar during the meetings , while they had to abstain from smoking. Bismarck, however, being loth to play second fiddle , and at the sametime anxious to assert Prussia's claim to equality with Austria, on seeing the President with a cigar took another from his own case and coolly asked the Austrian Minister for a light. Henceforth Bavaria, Saxony and all the rest smoked at the Conferences.

About that time I was sent to the Gymnasium , the public

school , and I hated it cordially all the five years I had to sit on its hard benches. It was situated in the most squalid part of the town , and the contrast between its dingy walls and nauseous atmosphere and the bright rooms and pure air of the Grünebourg, was most offensive and disagreeable. The public schools in Germany are all day schools. Fortunately we had many holidays , but Ientered it at the wrong moment, for the Head Master was about to resign , and the school was more or less in a state of transition and disorganisation . I may say that I learned nothing from my masters , who with the one exception of the teacher of history , a gentle and cultivated man, were unsympathetic and commonplace pedagogues . None of them had the knack of winning the affection of their pupils and of making them apply themselves to their work. Perhaps I should speak for myself only, but unlike Harrovians and Etonians I have the most unpleasant recollections of my school days . For this the masters were not alone responsible. Amongst all the schoolboys there was not one with whom I had anything in common . They were an uncouth, dull and uninteresting lot, and to this day I have never met one of them again . Young O'Hara and Malet , and the sons of the other English residents went to a private school.

In '56 an episode occurred which convulsed our household. My Mother was on a visit for a few days to her brother Lionel who was taking the waters at Aix-la-Chapelle, leaving us - my Sister Louisa,my younger Brother and Sister and myself - at the Grünebourg. In order to make my tale clear I must explain that the house looked north and south - my Mother's bedroom

looked north and mine south . It was a very hot summer and my room being oppresively sultry I took advantage of my Mother's absence to sleep in her room , which was much cooler than mine. The second day after my Mother's departure on being called in the morning by the head-footman who attended on me , I asked him whether he had looked in during the night as I had been awakened for a minute by someone opening the door. He expressed surprise and replied that he had not been in the room, but he added that the house had been entered by burglars who had left traces of their visit in the basement, where they had unsuccessfully tried to break open the door of the plate-closet. In reply to a question he assured me that as far as they had been able to ascertain nothing had been taken,in fact that no injury had been done beyond the smashing of a glass panel in the door of the plate-closet.

I rose at once, dressed in a hurry, summoned the servants together and cross-examined them to the best of my ability. Their answers tallied exactly with those of the head-footman so that I obtained no fresh information from them . Being then only seventeen years of age and having had no experience of any occurrence of the kind before , I was altogether unfit to deal with the situation. But it struck me at once that there was more in the affair than appeared at first sight , for it was incredible that burglars having effected an entrance into the house , and apparently not having been disturbed , should have left it empty-handed. Another strange feature of the business was that I should have been the only person awakened, and that the door of my room should have been opened with some object

which it was impossible to divine.

I directed an inspection of the whole interior of the house and found that seemingly no damage had been done , with the exception of that to the door of the plate-closet. But on searching the precincts of the house we picked up on the terrace a bunch of skeleton keys toegther with an ordinary key of superior workmanship .These were carefully examined but the servants one and all declared that they knew nothing of them. I should mention that the servants - with one exception - showed the utmost desire to assist me in my search for a clue to the mystery , and were perfectly cool and collected. That exception was Anna, our former nursemaid , to whom, as I have said, we were as much attached as she was devoted to us . Her manner was anxious and excited , her face was flushed, and she followed me about with sullen reluctance endeavouring to persuade me from persevering in the minute inpsection of the house which I had ordered , scouting the idea that anything had been stolen , and suggesting that the burglars had obviously left when they failed in their attempt on the plate-closet. Her strange demeanour puzzled me but I did not attach much importance to it as I had implicit faith in her honesty . Having ascertained all that was possible concerning the affair I wrote full particulars of it to my Mother, begging her to be at her ease and not to trouble to return earlier than she had intended.

When my Mother went on a journey it was her custom to send her jewels to the bank , only taking with her such few ornaments as she might require. On this occasion for the first time in her life she had left them at the Grünebourg. It appears,

as we afterwards learned, that she had locked the jewels in a wardrobe in her room - where I had slept during her absence- that she had placed the key of this wardrobe in a chest-of-drawers in the same room, and that she had entrusted the key of this chest-of-drawers to Anna. No one in the house but Anna and my Mother's French maid - who had accompanied her to Aix - knew that the jewels had not been taken to the bank as usual, or where they had been locked up . Not even one of my Sisters , who was staying in the house, or myself were aware that the jewels had been left behind.

On her return from Aix-la-Chapelle tow days after the burglary, my Mother told her maid to fetch the jewels , but the maid soon reappeared to inform her that the key of the wardrobe was missing from the chest-of-drawers of which Anna had the key. A locksmith was sent for, the wardrobe was forced open and to my Mother's amazement she found that the jewels were gone together with some laces and fans. We all exclaimed at once that the robbery was the work of the burglars , that the attempt on the plate-closet was only a feint , and that I was right in my assertion that the room had been entered on the night of the burglar's visit to the house. Moreover it was agreed that it was a fortunate thing for me that I had slept so soundly or else I might have fared ill.

But the locksmith shook his head at these theories and surmises. He said this was no ordinary burglary as both the chest-of-drawers and the wardrobe had both been opened with their own keys and not even with skeleton keys, as there was not a scratch on either of the locks. Anna was questioned and she asseverated that this could not be the case as she had

secreted the key of the chest-of-drawers under the mattress of her bed , and had not mentioned to a living soul that it was in her keeping much less where it was. The ornamental key and the bunch of skeleton keys found on the terrace were produced , and we were astounded to find that the ornamental key was the missing key of the wardrobe from which the jewels had been abstracted. How was it that Anna had not identified this key when it had originally been picked up ? It was now clear that as the chest of drawers had not been forced nor the lock picked , that whoever had stolen the jewels must have obtained possession of the key of the chest-of-drawers which had been entrusted to Anna.

The police were somewhat tardily sent for but instead of making an exhaustive enquiry , taking effective measures to trace the culprit or culprits by arresting the servants to whom suspicion pointed , or even having them watched, they were content to ask a few perfunctory questions , and these were chiefly addressed to me whom they seemed to fancy was implicated in the robbery . They then complained of fatigue, asked for some refreshment and then retired, dismissing the case as one of those impenetrable mysteries which it was hopeless to attempt to unravel. A more helpless set of idiots could not be imagined.

The fans and laces were discovered later on in the fields beyond the garden , but from that day to this the thieves have never been traced and the jewels have never been heard of. I have long and often ransacked my brain trying to find some solution of this mysterious affair, but in vain . All I can

now feel certain of is that it was either the work of or was connived at by some of the servants . Of these the French maid and Anna could alone have been implicated in it , as they alone knew that the jewels had been left at home and where they had been placed. We had a French butler at the time and eventually he married the French maid , and the couple then disappeared. It may be that they were the thieves. But the robbery had been elaborately planned , it was carried out in the absence of the maid as was proved by the date on which the house was broken into, and by the finding of the keys on the terrace and of the laces and fans in the fields. They might have had accomplices but it is hard to imagine how two foreigners could have found accomplices in a strange town , or having found them , it is difficult to think how they could have avoided sooner or later betraying themselves or their principals.

Then there was Anna. It transpired later on that our old English nurse Mrs Henderson , who had been promoted to the place of housekeeper, had been persuaded by Anna to entertain the servants and their friends at a supper party on the night of the burglary , and that Anna had been very much excited during the feast . She had a lover of long standing , a Frankfort workman ,and I think I remember hearing , though I am not quite certain of the fact , that he was not of the party. Anna , it will be recalled was strangely affected on the day after the burglary and was opposed to the inspection of the house which I had insisted on making . She neither recognised the key we had found on the terrace , nor did she even hint at the desirability of ascertaining whether the jewels were safe after the

house had been broken into . Implicitly as she had been trusted still , in my opinion , she was at the bottom of the theft ,for the key could not have been obtained from her without her knowledge or consent. Possibly she suddenly lost her head on seeing the valuables that had been entrusted to her, she may then have induced Mrs Henderson to give the supper party in order to get all the servants out of the way , and while it was going on she probably introduced her lover into the house and made him commit the sham attempt on the plate-closet. It must have been she who entered my room during the night , but it may be doubted whether it was at that time that the jewels were purloined. She could have taken them at any time during the day , and could scarcely have done so at night without rousing me from my slumbers , and she may have entered my room to convey the impression that the house had been broken into by burglars. She must have given the jewels, fans and laces to her lover , who threw the laces and fans away as soon as he left the house considering that they were of no use to him . It is possible , too , that she may have regretted the crime as soon as she had perpetrated it ,and either hid away the jewels in some place where they may still be , or have disposed of them through her lover for an insignificant sum .

We doubted her honesty so little at the time that we could not bear even the idea of suspecting her. She remained in our service until the death of my Mother , which took place three years after the theft, and during that time she was even more devoted to us than she had been before . My Mother would be attended by no one else during her last illness. Anna then

left , married her lover, and they settled in a small village near Frankfort, where she died several years afterwards in poor circusmtances . The footman who waited on me and acted as porter also remained some years longer with us. He then married and lived in Frankfort, dying several years later in equally poor circumstances.

It may be that some day the veil will be lifted from this painful affair, but I have not much hope. The jewels consited of four rows of matchless pearls with a splendid onyx and diamond clasp, several fine drop pearls, and various trinkets. Fortunately my Mother had left the most valuable portion of her jewels at the bank in Vienna,but those which were stolen were the ones she most prized, and their loss affected her grievously.

Early in the 'fifties' my Father had been compelled to take up his abode altogether in Vienna as my Grandfather left that city to reside permanently in Paris and made over to my Father the management of our house of business in Vienna. My Mother, too, soon had to migrate from Frankfort , which she never ceased to regret , and we had to follow; but she always returned with us for the summer to the Grünebourg .

Those first years of my life are fraught with indelible impressions compared to which those of the next few are pale and insignificant; and I look back all the more gratefully and fondly to them , as the time I spent in Vienna was singularly devoid of any pleasurable emotions . The change in my surroundings, occupations and friends was so complete, the life I now

suddenly entered upon was so entirely different from the one to which I had been accustomed that the period of my early youth forms a distinct and separate chapter, and stands out all the more forcibly in my memory .

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Chapter II.

VIENNA.

Es gibt nur a Kaiserstadt

Es gibt nur a Wien .

'There is but one Imperial town , there is but one Vienna' is an old adage still much in vogue with the patriotic Viennese, and against which there is little to be said. There are other imperial cities in Europe, and of late Vienna has undergone a complete transformation , but it has retained a character quite peculiar to itself and its prestige has remained unimpaired . When Austria had been rudely awakened by the Prussian guns at Sadowa from the fool's paradise in which she had been slumbering , her entire organisation was subjected to sweeping reforms; the first of which was the demolition of the fortifications of her capital . No other city has ever had a chance of carrying out improvements on so colossal a scale without involving any charge on the taxpayer. The ground of the fortifications was handed over to the municipality , which , reserving a certain portion of it for its own purposes , put up the remainder for sale . With the proceeds of this transaction they laid out the Ringstrasse , lined it with the Houses of Parliament , the Mansion House, the Museums, the new Imperial

Palace, and many other edifices ; while the purchasers of the residue of the ground erected a complete new town on the site of the fortifications.

But the Vienna of old though less splendid and vast than the Vienna of to-day , had features of singular attraction the disappearance of which must be a cause of regret to the admirer of the picturesque and the lover of ancient customs and traditions. Small and cramped within its ramparts,the inner town was a city of palaces where resided most of the great nobles , the higher clergy and the men of wealth ; while in the suburbs beyond the glacis dwelt the less well-to-do classes. With the exception of two or three squares and one street , the Graben, the streets were so narrow that you might converse and almost shake hands with your opposite neighbour , and they were alive with a gay throng of pedestrians,and smart carriages and cabs all going a tremendous pace . The army being considered the only profession that a gentleman could adopt without derogating from his honour , and no officer being allowed to wear civilian dress even when off duty, their uniforms being as ornate as they were varied,the crowd presented an appearance of extreme brilliancy .

Hungary not having yet secured autonomy and there being no demand for it in Bohemia and Croatia, all the great nobles of the different nationalities of which the Austrian Empire consists had their headquarters at and resided in Vienna,where they entertained sumptuously ; while the people led a contented and peaceful life , troubling themslves little if at all about the questions of the day , which they left to the care of a

patriarchal government. Their day's work ended they sauntered in the public gardens where, imbibing numerous pints of beer, they listened to the strains of the Strauss or of a military band and then adjourned to the theatre. Now, the narrow and tortuous streets have been pulled down,but as at Frankfort, what Vienna has gained in salubrity and convenience she has lost in many other respects .

There is no longer a fashionable quarter, men of rank and wealth having erected new houses in all parts of the city, and most of the old, fine and quaint mansions in the inner city have disappeared. Political considerations have induced the chief Hungarian and Bohemian nobles to transfer their domiciles to Pesth and Prague , and Vienna is now despoiled of the animation and luxury these magantes brought in their train, while the agricultural depression which hasaffected Austria as well as the rest of Europe has obliged many landlords to keep away in the provinces.

No capital had a nobler Park than the Prater. It was a long and.silent expanse of grass and woodland extending from the northern portion of the town to beyond the Danube, with centenarian trees,and herds of red deer which had been established there for many generations . But many of the ancient trees have now perished from age or have been cut down; the deer have been destroyed through motives of economy, and on each side of the great avenue are noisy restaurants and drinking booths. Political agitation having turned the heads of the people they have lost , to a great extent , their kindliness and goodhumour , and instead of being only on guileless pleasure

bent they hold mass meetings , discourse wildly on woman's suffrage and other social subjects to the detriment of their peace of mind and of the cause of good government.

And yet , as I have said , an air of good breeding, of aristocratic and imperial dignity still pervades the whole city , giving it an aspect hardly to be met with elsewhere . There is certainly no other town to compare with it in this respect , but whether its exceptional character may be altogether interpreted according to the old adage and in the sense its inhabitants would imply , is a question which I should prefer not to be called upon to decide. Sentimental considerations aside it must be admitted that Vienna has not lagged behind other capitals , and it may be hoped that the many social problems , with the solution of which every class of her inhabitants are now engaged will some day find a satisfactory settlement.

I forget the exact year , but it was shortly after I848 when I first visited Vienna. My Brother and I were sent there on a holiday trip with our tutor,and we little thought at the time that it would become our future abode. The railway from Frankfort not being completed part of the journey was performed in the diligence , which broke down one night. We started on a mild day but had not proceeded far when it began to snow and freeze, and having no wraps or thick coats I suffered considerably from the cold , some of my toes being frozen . We intended remaining at Prague only one day, but our stay was unexpectedly prolonged as we were placed under arrest at our hotel.The

intelligent authorities were still excited over the recent disturbances of '48 so that they scented a conspirator in every stranger . They derided the authenticity of our passports and would have it that our French tutor was no less a person than Kossuth . It took no little time , trouble and perseverance to prove to them that we were peaceable and harmless tourists travelling merely for pleasure .

Soon after the Revolution of '48 my Grandfather left Vienna to reside in Paris and , as I have said , handed over the management of the business of our Austrian firm to my Father , thus compelling him to give up his house in Frankfort and to reside permanently in Vienna. When my Mother and we children returned to the Grünebourg for the summer , I attended the Frankfort Gymnasium , while in the winter I went to school in Vienna. I cannot tell why but instead of being sent to the Theresianum , the best educational establishment there, I was sent to school at the Schotten Kloster - the Scottish Monastery- which was chiefly patronised by the middle-classes , and where our teachers the Monks enforced a very lax discipline . However badly I knew my lessons , or however unpunctually I attended school I was never reprimanded. The Monks were easy going jolly good-fellows , living most comfortably if not splendidly in their huge Monastery,which covered several acres in the very heart of the town, deriving a colossal revenue from the estates which belonged to their order. My education which was much injured by this disjointed life was still further interfered with by an annual autumn holiday of three months , which we passed at my Father's estate of Schillersdorf in Silesia.

Schillersdorf was a grand domain situated amid picturesque scenery, the Carpathian Mountains framing in the horizon , with large forests , extensive tracts of grass land ,endless acres of beetroot, several sugar factories , and lakes which teemed with fish - chiefly pike - and wildfowl . Ratibor, the nearest townlet , was fifteen miles distant , and the roads were unkept and wretched , being impassable in bad weather ; while the population was Slavonic of the lowest type and grade of civilisation , living in squalid huts . We were surrounded by large estates , the most important being those of Count Larisch on one side and Prince Lichnowsky on the other , but their residences were at a great distance from ours . We had , strictly speaking, only two 'squireens' as neighbours, and as a social resource these were of small account. We lived almost in a state of complete isolation , although of this we had had no reason to complain .

The house , once a monastery , was in the centre of a small park, which was at once much enlarged by my Father,and my Mother assisted in laying it out and planting it. It was an oasis in the wilderness, being provided with every British comofrt and French luxury.The whole estate was a game preserve and we were able to shoot five days a week for three months. I often went out at sunrise after duck , during the day after partridge, and at dusk stalked a roebuck. In the evening we acted charades , the audience consisting of our Parents and the bailiff. Once we had a ball for the officials of the estate and those from our sugar factories and mines. Occasionally we had shooting parties ; but what I liked best was the sense of freedom and independence inspired by the vastness, I might say ,the

unlimited expanse of the estate. At times we had to drive two hours to the place where we had to shoot, we could walk or drive all day without coming to the open , and in the fields we rode unhindered as long and as far as we chose. There was no one to interfere with our sport or our pleasures. We led a thoroughly seignorial life, heedless of the cares and the bustle of the outer world, such as might have been led by young lordlings in olden times when railways and telegraphs and all the inventions of modern days were still undreamt of and they had but themselves and their enjoyments to consider.

But this life considerably interfered with my studies and moreover it estranged me from my old home at Frankfort while preventing me from taking to my new home at Vienna. Having now two , I might say , three homes ,I virtually had none. There is no more critical period in the existence of a man than that at which he is passing from boyhood to manhood. His character is then formed and the whole trend of his career depends on the impressions he then receives . No wonder then that being denationalised , so to speak , on the one hand , and not renationalised on the other, on being left more or less my own master at my dear Mother's death - which took place when I was nineteen years old -I severed the slender ties that bound me to the countries I had hitherto lived in , and when chance took me shortly afterwards on a visit to England , the land of my dreams , I prolonged that visit , repeated it for some years, and finally made England my permanent abode.

The first winter I spent in Vienna was that of I854-5, the last was that of I858-9, and of these five winters my

recollections are not altogether of the pleasantest. My Father was becoming a recluse, shunning the world, and wholly engrossed in his business; two of my three elder Sisters were married, and the third who was of a shy disposition was most unwillingly dragged to parties and balls; my younger Sister and Brother were children , and my elder Brother was arriving at an age when my pursuits were no longer his and his were not yet mine. I had friends , but in my young days I really only cared for my own belongings. My chief amusement was the theatre to which I now went ~~at~~ nights with my Mother, and , that of Paris excepted , there was no better theatre in Europe.

During the first of these winters in Vienna my Brother and I had to march daily round the ramparts as we used to march round the Frankfort promenades. Almost daily we met the Emperor taking his constitutional in the company of an Equerry, and His Majesty always smiled and graciously returned our salute when we stopped and doffed our caps. As I grew older I drove after luncheon to the Prater. The same equipages, horses and individuals appeared there day after day at the same hour , and I soon had them at my finger's ends , from the Archduke Franz Karl , the Emperor's father , who always drove out in a light green carriage with four grey horses , the Empress and the Archduchess Sophie , the Emperor's Mother, who were followed on foot by their two footmen , the great ladies who had but one footman down to the wives of prosperous shopkeepers who had no footmen in their wake.

Much commotion was created one day in the crowd when the

old Archduchess Sophie stopped my Mother to thank her for a couple of pines. These were then a rare luxury at Vienna and my Mother had received them as a New Year's present from Paris. The Empress was then the cynosure of every eye and the special object of my attention . Since then I have had the good fortune to become acquainted with many very beautiful women but I have never met one to rival the Empress of Austria in her young days .I saw her at the play , at public balls , in the Prater and once when the Emperor opened the Reichsrath, and she always displayed an unequalled grace and dignity. Her figure though slight was imposing, her eyes were most winsome and their glance seemed to caress those she looked at - though probably without seeing the object at which they were directed- her features were perfect , her complexion was the softest and most brilliant, and an inexpressible charm radiated from her which could be felt but which it is impossible to describe. I then little dreamt that in later days I should have had the honour of becoming acquainted with and spending many happy days in the company of Her Majesty .

Being too young to go into society and my parents , as I have said, entertaining very little, I had few opportunities of meeting the notabilities of the day ;of whom , however, there were few of historic importance. Prince Metternich whose reactionary policy was largely responsible for the decline of Austria , the Revolution of I848 , and the collapse of the Bourbons and Hapsburgs in Italy, was still alive . My Parents often dined or spent the evening at his house when the veteran

statesman much to their delight read out to them passages from his memoirs. These memoirs when published failed to realise the high expectations of the world, but read by their author who probably selected the most interesting portions and added his own comments , they must have proved uncommonly fascinating. Prince Esterhazy the Austrian Ambassador to England at the time of the Queen's Coronation , of whom the doggerel lines were written -

It made you quite crazy
To see Prince Esterhazy -

owing to the dazzling magnificence of his jewels, often entertained my Parents and was entertained by them at dinner. To the end of his life he was very proud of his jewels and loved to exhibit them to his friends. After his death they were sold in England.

Regarded from a purely social standpoint the Austrians are preeminent, for there is no more well-bred, distinguished looking or joyous and unaffected nation in the world. A ball at Vienna - I went to two or three at the end of my last winter there - was a sight not easily to be forgotten . The splendidly proportioned and well lit rooms, the gallant bearing of the men and the smartness of their uniforms, the beauty of the women and the profusion of their ornaments , the excellence of the band whose exhilarating strains would have animated a stone , furnished a combination which could scarcely be met with anywhere else. But most remarkable of all was the zest with which everyone danced , all moving with grace and feeling, throwing themselves heart and soul into the motion as if their very lives depended upon it.

A review was one of the most striking of the spectacles in which Vienna abounded. One was annually held on the glacis before the Imperial Palace. To see the young Emoeror leaving the Palace escorted by a numerous staff , the extraordinary richness of the uniforms of his officers, and the quality of their showy Arab horses , the beautiful Empress following in her open carriage ,the march past of the troops to the music of the best military bands in Europe, the precision of their movements - was all like the realisation of a dream of martial splendour.

It is not my intention to indulge in lengthy comments on the political events of the last thirty years which have effected so serious a change in the position of the Austrian monarchy in Germany and the organisation of her internal policy , or to moralise on the causes to which these changes may be attributed. But having been under the spell of the old regime , and having been fascinated by its glamour, I cannot refrain from pausing for a few moments to deplore the existence of that system which was , to a great extent, responsible for its decadence . When in I683 John Sobieski , King of Poland, obliged the Sultan to raise the siege of Vienna and saved the monarchy , the Emperor Leopold enquired whether according to etiquette he could shake hands with one who was an elected not a hereditary sovereign . The pride of caste with its narrow-minded exclusiveness which blinded the Emperor to all notions of common sense and the most ordinary gratitude , dominated all classes in Austria - a domination which endured for many long years . The Court was the sole fountain of honour and promotion

and to qualify for honour and promotion it was obligatory that one should be presented at Court. And again , to be'Court capable'one had to show an unbroken line of sixteen noble ancestors on the mother's as well as on the father's side. Some few exceptionally clever plebeians were called to fill government offices but the doors of society were closed if not against them, at any rate against their wives and children ; while high rank irrespective of merit , was an open sesame to the most dignified and exalted positions.

Thus little incentive was given to labour for the good of the country to those who met with no individual recognition from the leading classes and who had to be content to belong to a second and inferior caste. It was not so in France even under the Bourbons , when these stringent rules of court etiquette were applied only to men and not to their wives. The Austrian nobles , to avoid forfeiting for their descendants the right of going to Court, and in order not to expose their wives to the insulting sneers of society, intermarried. In France a Colbert, a Louvois - to cite two out of many instances - rose from the humblest rank and founded families which were placed on an equal footing with those of the most ancient lineage. A Molière, a Rousseau, a Voltaire, or a Beaumarchais might not be invited to a Court Ball, but they were received with open arms in the most fashionable and exclusive houses. The heads of the greatest and most ancient French families constantly allied themselves with the daughters of rich financiers whose salons became the most fashionable in Paris, and who were not only invited to Versailles but moved in complete equality with

the greatest ladies in the realm . In Austria not the most able Minister nor the most brilliant writer or wit would have dreamt of the possibility of being received in society. Princess Sarah Esterhazy , the daughter of Lady Jersey but the granddaughter of a banker , was coldshouldered by Viennese society on that account.

I may mention one illustration of the absurd results of the Court etiquette which still prevailed when I was living in Vienna. Officers even of plebeian birth when on active service were admitted to certain Court Balls, for the army being the most privileged profession it was deemed expedient to show it some consideration . There was a certain general who was a Baron but who had not his thirty-two quarterings , yet being in the army was asked to a Court Ball. His wife belonged to one of the best families in the land and as a girl she went to every Court function , but having married one who was not blessed with the same advantages , she , her children and her children's children were excluded from Court. Her husband was invited as an officer , yet she was disabled from going because in his private capacity he was not fully entitled to the distinction , although at the sametime her own quarterings fulfilled every requirement of Court etiquette. Could such an anomaly be imagined in any age in any country ?

About the sametime the daughter of a Prince Lobkowitz became engaged to be married to a Baron Stauffenberg .Princess Lobkowitz gave her consent to the marriage but it soon transpired that she considered that her daughter was conferring a great honour on the family of Stauffenberg by bestowing herself

on one of its members. This came to the ears of the young man's Mother who at once called on the Princess with the genealogical tree of her husband's family and triumphantly proved that they of Stauffenberg were of more eminent lineage than the Lobkowitzes. Nevertheless Princess Lobkowitz begged for an audience of the Emperor and obtained his permission that the future Baroness should be allowed to use a Princess's instead of a Baroness's coronet on her armorial bearings .

But the caste system with its deplorable effects would not have been alone sufficient to account for Austria's decline. The suppression of liberty stifled every individual impulse and impeded all improvement and progress. However distinguished were some of her sovereings and statesmen, however brave her soldiers, a dead hand weighed on the liberties and the aspirations of her people , so that with the exception of a few musical composers she has produced hardly any men whose names could be inscribed in a Valhalla of celebrities, or who have contributed to the greatness and prosperity of their own country or to the civilisation of the world.

Liberty at last burst its bonds. First ,Italy freed herself from the thraldom of Austrian power and influence, then Hungary the most progressive and enlightened dominion of the monarchy , the foremost champion of liberty , asserted her independence . But what has been the fate of Austria now that she is free ? An indivisible empire in the past though consisting of heterogeneous elements and diverse nationalities, she kept them together with an iron grip -now she is a dual monarchy divided against herself . Hungary with her eighteen

millions of people has gained substantially by her autonomy; but its effect has been to destroy all community of interest and feeling between the Hungarians and the twenty-two millions of peoples of other nationalities which are little more than nominally united under the same ruler. Hungary looks to her own advantage exclusively , regardless of that of her fellow-subjects in the adjoining countries. The Bohemians, the Croats and Austrians are struggling for the recognition of their claim to be regarded as separate nationalities, and by their mutual jealousies and internal feuds as well as by the concessions they have extracted from successive incapable or impotent Governments are accelerating the disintegration of the monarchy and paving the way for revolution, disorder and anarchy .Liberty was the bugbear that Austria most dreaded and therefore long suppressed. By the suppression of liberty she brought on her decay , and when liberty won the day it became the chief element in producing the present chaotic condition of her affairs .

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Chapter III

Bric-à-brac.

Of late years the accumulating of works of art of earlier periods has become a recognised institution , and the taste for bric-à-brac , which until recently was confined to a small and select class, has developed into an almost universal mania. Nearly every provincial town in England and abroad possesses a museum , every islet in the Aegean Sea sets up a building for the antiquities unearthed within its shores, and even the Turk jealously forbids the exportation of the artistic remains which the exertions of the Frank bring to light . In every country private collections are formed of all styles of old art from antique statues to buttons and shoes, for the discovery of which the palace and the cottage is explored and ransacked , and for the acquisition of which unimaginable extravagances are committed. The mania lends itself to satire , but it has its precedents far back in history . Verres and Nero , Francis the First, Cardinal Wolsey, and the Medici ,Charles the First and Mazarin , were impassioned collectors of old art , and they have had many imitators. In the eighteenth century in fact there was hardly a man of position who was not

a collector . Europe then became too exhausted by her polit-
ical upheavals to make collecting possible for a time , but as
soon as she recovered from her depression the collector reap-
peared . At some future time perhaps some now unthought of cat-
astrophe may convulse the civilised world , forcibly putting
a stop to the collector's activities , but when order is once
more restored men of culture and means will be again anxious to
gratify a taste natural to an educated and polished mind, and
in the pursuit they will repeat the extravagances and the
follies of which their forerunners are now accused .

Nor can it be otherwise. Warfare and religious fanatic-
ism , fires and earthquakes , have destroyed most of the works
of art of the past, and of those which escaped that fate many
have fallen a prey to ignorance and greed. Old works of art
are rare , and they are precious because they are rare, and
when they are beautiful as well their possession becomes doubly
desirable. Casuists may argue that old art can be so faithful-
ly copied that the replica cannot be distinguished from the
original. But even were that a fact, a copy, at its best , is
but an excellent imitation or a clever forgery . Modern art
when it happens to be entirely original loses much of its value
because of the facility with which it can be obtained .

Old works of art are not , however, desirable only for
their rarity or beauty, but for their associations , for the
memories they evoke , the trains of thought to which they lead,
and the many ways they stimulate the imagination and realize
our ideals . Only the minority of collectors perhaps are sway-
ed by these impulses , but they set the example. Among the

majority there are many , doubtless, who collect purely for the amusement and excitement collecting affords , others from vanity and imitation of their betters, others again who fancy that by filling their houses with old pictures , old cabinets and old china they establish a claim to consideration . No doubt strange excesses are often committed by the discriminating few as well as by the undiscriminating many, still, as is constantly proved in the auction mart , a collection judiciously made , even regardless of cost , generally retains its value .

It would hardly be fair to cast any blame for the mania on the leaders of a fashion which within these last few decades has assumed such colossal proportions, or to attempt to fasten the responsibility for it on my family , as has often been done . For though it is true that they have been purchasing old works of art for nearly three-quarters of a century and have occasionally been carried away in their anxiety to secure an article of superlative merit, their purchases , on the whole have been cautiously and unostentatiously made and , as a rule, they have avoided publicity in their transactions .

Moreover it should be remembered that the country houses of Great Britain were hung with Old Masters and filled with old cabinets and china long before any member of my family ever dreamt of such luxuries . The Prince Regent and his friends harvested the spoils of the French Revolution when my Grandfather was barely out of his teens, and when my relatives first seriously entered the lists Lord Hertford, the Messrs Mills, the Messrs Baring , Mr Magniac and many others in England,while

M.Debruges , Count Pourtalès, Prince Soltykoff, M. Roger, M. Thiers and Prince Demidoff in France were already contending with each other in the auction room . It is the apparent ubiquitousness of my family with its members residing in Vienna, Frankfort, Paris, Naples and London , and all of them lovers of and purchasers of old art that accounts , to a great extent, for our name being so prominently identified with the mania.

It is true that in one respect my family have assisted in developing a new departure . From the fall of the old régime in France until the beginning of the Second Empire the style of the internal decoration of French houses of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries was contemned or ignored. In England the early Italian , the Queen Anne , or no style , had long been preferred ; pictures , cabinets , china of all periods being usually placed on a damask or plain coloured background. It was lavish or simple , often its merits were great, but the decoration was never 'French'. In France the style of decoration remained French, but it was a bastard nineteenth century style , graceless and tasteless , borrowing hardly a single feature from its predecessors . Whether it is to the credit of my family or not may be a matter of opinion, but the fact remains that they first revived the decoration of the eighteenth century in its purity, reconstructing their rooms out of old material , reproducing them as they had been during the reigns of the Louis, while at the sametime adapting them to modern requirements. In England as yet this new departure has not struck root so deeply as on the Continent. But the initiative taken by my family has been widely followed abroad and has

led to an excessive outlay on objects less commendable for their artistic value than for their charm .

Before dismissing the question as to what extent the now prevalent mania was originally due to my family it may be admitted that owing to the great extension of wealth and luxury throughout the world, when twelve thousand guineas is given for a brood mare, a thousand for a hack , three hundred for a postage stamp or an orchid, and when no limit is set to the gratification of fashionable whims, fine and genuine old works of art will continue in the same demand , and as the supply diminishes the demand will increase. For upwards of thirty years economists and moralists have been predicting a crash in the curiosity market, and have been warning the collector that one day he would be overtaken by a most terrible retribution . The collector while smiling incredulously deplores the spread of the mania , but he deplores it for a very different reason .

In the earlier years of this century buyers were few. They were men of knowledge, true lovers of art, engaged in a pursuit which often entailed much trouble, discomfort, perseverance and energy , and in fact sacrifices of various kinds.There have always been dealers of all sorts, dishonest as well as honest . Even in the days of antiquity there were rogues who fabricated old Greek statues and gems for the Roman 'novi homines' , and during the last two centuries 'Old Masters' were forged wholesale for the young man of quality on the grand tour. But many of the dealers of the past generation were devoted to the profession for its own merits and not merely for the profit it brought. They took a genuine pride in a fine article that fell into their hands , regarding it fondly and

reverentially , often hiding it for months and only parting with it reluctantly.

The Old Curiosity Shop with its dingy recesses and its picturesque assemblage of motley articles is now transformed into a garish 'Fine Art Gallery', the dealer is a gentleman who makes it a favour to show one his goods, talks glibly of Marie Antoinette and Cellini , often in reality ignorant whether Cellini lived before or after Marie Antoinette , whether he was a prince or an artist , or whether his name was a mere technical term . Then in former days to obtain one of the many fine articles that had been scattered far and wide , and which perchance had found its way from an old castle into some humble abode, the most persuasive arguments and delicate compliments and even prolonged intrigues were required , not on the part of the professional dealer only but on that of the private collector who thus met with interesting adventures and lived in an atmosphere of mystery and emotion . Now the Collector need only sit in his chair ,open his purse-strings and the mountain will come to him , he need not go to the mountain . A Trade has been established in works of art as universal, international and systematic as any other. In every large city there are many dealers who are in daily correspondence with the dealers in the small towns , who in their turn employ runners. These runners explore the country and inform their employers where and when some old work of art can be obtained ; which being obtained passes from one hand to another until at last it reaches Paris or London , and he who pays best will be best served.

Manufactories have been established in different countries, whence are forwarded , for the benefit of the tourist , 'old' Norwegian plate to Trondjem and Bergen,'old' Arab glasses to Cairo ,'old' French furniture to Paris,'old' German cups to Dresden and Nuremberg,'old' pictures , armour and statuary to Rome, Florence and Venice. The cautious and intelligent collector even occasionally burns his fingers , for the dealers are often too cunning for him , but he is soon taught to be on his guard . He may lament his want of discretion but he regrets still more that all the poetry of the old times , that the quaintness of his old haunts has vanished ,and that the romance of his favourite pursuit has degenerated into a vulgar traffic.

When I first began to collect the halcyon period was on the wane, but it was still in its full zenith when I was a child. In the early 'forties' as I have said we resided in Frankfort, spending the winters in the town , and the summer at a villa close by. As soon as the swallow's made their appearance my Father's curiosities were packed and stored away in a strong room, where they remained until the cold drove us back again from the country . It was my privilege on these occasions to place some of the smaller articles in their old leather cases, and then again in the winter to assist in unpacking them and rearranging them in their places .Merely to touch them sent a thrill of delight through my small frame . Long before I was born my Father had acquired a collection of Dutch pictures in Holland . Day after day I would reverently study them , learning under my Mother's tuition to distinguish

a Teniers from an Ostade or a Wouvermans from a Both. I had a particular fancy , however, for a head of a girl by Greuze.* Much to my Mother's amusement I would kneel on the floor, fold my hands as if in prayer and screw up my eyes in mimicry of the picture , and often when a visitor was announced I was invited to my great satisfaction , to go through this performance.

But my happiness was greatest when Professor Oppenheim was announced . He was a painter of no special merit but he was a friend of the family, and all we children had to sit to him for our portraits - which in days not far distant will probably adorn the stewards' and housekeepers' rooms. I readily for gave him the severe trials of patience to which he subjected me , because he was one of my Father's chief purveyors of works of art . In those days there were no curiosity dealers in Frankfort worthy of the name , but his work took the Professor into many private houses , where he occasionally discovered and picked up a fine old German cup , which he then brought to my Father. I cannot describe the joy I felt when he unpacked some quaint Nuremberg or Augsburg tankard , or the figure of a man , a lion or a stag , which was weighed and bought by the weight . Oh! for those good old days when the artistic merit of a cup was of no account to its possessor, and he merely valued it according to the number of ounces it contained !

My Father had a serious rival in my Uncle Anselm who formed a fine collection of old German plate. Once a pair of beautifully chiselled cups dated I568 were offered to my

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*Iregret to have to acknowledge now that this picture is either an old copy or a contenporary imitation of the master. It hangs at this moment in a bedroom at Waddesdon .

Father. The value according to the then custom went as usual by the weight and as the cups were small the price was trifling . For some reason I have never ascertained my Father would purchase only one of the cups and persuaded his Uncle to take the other. This Uncle bequeathed the whole of his plate to my Uncle Lionel , and his cup went eventually by inheritance to my Cousin Alfred, while my Father's came into my hands. One day while deploring to my Cousin that the pair should have been divided he most generously pressed the acceptance of his cup on me , so that after a separation of more than fifty years the two have been united again .

My paternal Grandfather , the head of our Austrian firm , lived in Vienna , and he too was a collector , but his fondness for my Father , who was his only son , induced him as a rule to give him his purchases. I well remember the arrival of an old German cup* , representing a chamois , of the finest workmanship, and the pleasure I experienced on seeing it . But my Grandfather's most important acquisition was made about the year I820 , when he bought some two hundred* ivory tankards , vases, cups and figures belonging to Prince Coltalto's collection . Prince Coltalto was the descendant of the Austrian General of that name who in the beginning of the seventeenth century took Mantua and looted it . His soldiers behaved like Vandals , smashing what they could not carry away from the Royal Palace , and wading knee deep,it is recorded,through shattered vases and dishes of rock crystal. The General

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*Now the property of my brother Nathaniel .

*These, too , now belong to my brother Nathaniel .

however , feathered his nest for the benefit of his descendant whose works of art long supplied the market , and I cannot forbear expressing my regret that my Grandfather would only purchase his ivories.

Perhaps, however, my Father's finest piece of ivory was a large tankard mounted in silver , which was only obtained by the exercise of considerable craft . It belonged to an old citizen of Wurzburg and my Father was aware that were he to make an offer in his own name the worthy burgher, believing he possessed some unrivalled treasure , would either ask some extravagant price or stick to it pertinaciously and obstinately. So my Father proceeded to Wurzburg disguised as a professor, attired in a shabby old coat , and so delighted the old gentleman with his talk , that he persuaded him to part with the tankard for sixty pounds.

On another occasion my Father's diplomatic skill proved sadly at fault. Visitors to the Louvre will have noticed the many fine sixteenth century works of art bequeathed to it by the late M. Sauvageot. M. Sauvageot was a poor violonist employed at the Paris Opera , and was devoted to ancient art. To gratify his passion for it he lived in the humblest way and expended every franc he earned on the purchase of old carvings and furniture, which he ferreted out from the most obscure hiding places. It is related of him that one day he fainted with joy on recognising on a portrait of Henri II he chanced to see, the presentment of a chiselled silver purse the original of which he had acquired for a song. While staying in Paris once my Father and Professor Oppenheim obtained permission to visit

M. Sauvageot's collection . Whether owing to the excitement he felt at the sight or to the Professor's unfamiliarity with French, the unfortunate fact has to be recorded that the two friends expressed to each other in German their admiration of the beautiful objects they saw. M. Sauvageot who was unacquainted with that language imagined they employed it to make disparaging remarks on his treasures , and so bitterly resented what he deemed to be an affront that he swore that no person bearing my Father's name should ever again be admitted under his roof. Time failed to soothe his irritation and several of my relatives afterwards knocked in vain at his door. Some years subsequent to my Father's unlucky visit my eldest sister Julia was passing through Paris , and was most anxious to see the collection but was aware of the fatal prohibition . She drove up in a cab to M. Sauvageot's house , and sent up word that a lady wished to show him an old enamel she had for sale . For once the net was not spread in vain in the sight of the bird, for though wily, M. Sauvageot was snared . The enamel was soon put on one side for it was worthless, but the discussion branched off to other topics , historical and artistic , and M. Sauvageot was so enchanted with my Sister's tact , knowledge and taste, that when she revealed her identity he smilingly promised to remove the prohibition from which my family had suffered so long .

My Father might have formed a matchless collection, for he lived in a country where for years old works of art were deemed worthless, and he had the Austrian market all to himself. But his taste was limited to a small range as he cared for

minute articles only , besides which his time was too much occupied with business to enable him to devote much of it to other pursuits . When I left Vienna for London in I860 I had many opportunities of offering him works of art , but he rarely availed himself of them . Many and many a time dealers showed me some fine article for which I had not space in my humble lodgings or which I had not the means to acquire , and which I then offered to my Father, but as a rule he declined them. Perhaps the object was in the hands of some person he disliked, it may not have been to his taste , or was too expensive . He would not hear of two large paintings by Boucher for which Attenborough,the dealer, asked two thousand five hundred pounds because he said Boucher was merely a decorator and not an artist . The pictures remained unsold until the year I864 when the late Lord Tweedmouth, then Mr Marjoribanks, obtained them for fifteen hundred pounds. When I was engaged to be married and had bought the house in which I am now living , I met Mr Marjoribanks who was building Brook House, and he told me that he thought he would be unable to find a place for them, in which case he would make them over to me. My heart fluttered wildly , I already saw the Bouchers on my wall. But my hopes were short-lived, as Mr Wyatt,the architect of Brook House,provided for the canvases. Since then fifteen thousand pounds have been offered for them in vain .

A large enamel sconce by Jean Courtois , which the dealer Joseph sen. brought from Riga, a work of the highest excellence, was declined by my Father simply because he would not have transactions with 'old' Joseph . 'Old' Joseph sold it to

my cousin Gustave and when my Father saw it in Paris he bitterly regretted having refused it . Finally let me mention a small carved boxwood chapel or altar piece , the property of Lord Howard of Glossop. My Father had seen it exhibited at the South Kensington Museum , and told me that if I could ever obtain it for a certain sum , I might buy it for him . Luck would have it that Lord Howard of Glossop eventually consented to part with it for that very sum . I at once informed my Father, but he replied that he would no longer give the amount he had originally named , and directed me to offer a lesser sum . The chapel was taken to paris where it found a home in the collection of my cousin Adolphe .

Perhaps of all the articles he possessed the one my Father cherished most was a small boxwood figure of a patrician lady , singed by Albrecht Durer. It happened one day that while accompanying his uncle James on a round of shopping in Vienna my Father saw this figure at Mr Ampichel's shop - then the most noted picture and curiosity dealer in that city. He could hardly master his emotion and was fearfully apprehensive lest it might be noticed by his worthy relative , but fortunately it escaped the keen eye of Baron James . As soon as his Uncle was safely disposed of my Father rushed back to Mr Ampichel , and bought the figure for the small sum of a hundred florins - about eight pounds.

But some years later Baron James had his revenge . In I854 or '55 my parents were informed that Count Schönborn of Pommersfeld intended selling his art treasures. Pommersfeld is near Wurzburg , and though now denuded of its artistic contents

still ranks as one of the finest chateaux in Germany . My Mother who was staying at Frankfort made an excursion to Pommersfeld, when the only purchase she made was a small picture by Metsu , but she returned full of ecstacy over some sixteenth century stamped leather wall hangings , the like of which she declared she had never seen before. She strongly urged my Father to allow her to acquire them , and by an unfortunate cojncidence Baron James coming to Frankfort at this time my Mother , in the innocence of her heart , spoke to him of the leather in terms of glowing admiration . Baron James never moved a muscle and maintained the most discreet silence , but on the following day he posted off to Wurzburg and bought the leather for his Chateau of Ferrières , of which it is now the chief ornament.

Once I had a unique opportunity of laying the foundations of a collection for myself. In the autumn of I867 I went to Russia and soon after my arrival at St. Petersburg I became acquainted with the Secretary to the French Embassy, whose name I have forgotten ,who informed me that he was entrusted with the sale of the collection of the Princess Galitzin, a relative of his by marriage. This collection was the third part of one originally formed by the Princess's ancestor Count Poucheleff Besborodko , a Minister and favourite of the Empress Catherine . The other two parts had been inherited by the Count's other descendants , and had been disposed of to various French and English dealers and amateurs . My French friend gave me the catalogue of the Princess's collection with the price of each article marked , and offered me the first refusal

of anything I chose to take. He begged me not to tarry as a gang of foreign dealers - 'la bande noire' as they were called-headed by M. Spitzer , were lying in wait like a pack of wolves only too eager to pounce on the articles. On entering the Princess's Palace and seeing the many fine pictures, the furniture , the sixteenth century works of art , I lost my breath . No amateur ever had such an opportunity, and possibly will never have the like again , for many of the articles were of the highest quality , and the prices were most moderate . I alas ! was still very inexperienced , moreover I was bewildered and hustled , and finally being in deep mourning I was not in the mood to take advantage of the opportunity. For myself I bought only a very inferior picture of the school of Snyders, but I selected two sixteenth century articles , not for myself or my Father , but for my Uncle Lionel to whom I was desirous of showing some little attention . One was a large topaz cup mounted in gold and enamel, the other , a small rock-crystal vase mounted in the same way . My Father might possibly have grumbled at first , still he would have been pleased with the cup , but my Uncle disdained it and put it aside for he possessed one of the same kind only more important and finer still. Eventually he exchanged it with M. Spitzer for a Louis XVI mantelpiece clock , and this cup for which I paid three hundred pounds Spitzer sold for three thousand to Baron Seillière,whose son after his father 's death sold it to one of my relatives in whose possession it now is .My only consolation for the idiotcy of my behaviour in having limited my purchases to these few things , I may say was the boundless rage of the 'bande

noire' at having lost the cup . Still they need hardly be pitied , for they took over the greater part of the collection , the choicest portion of which they disposed of at a great profit to Lord Hertford.

This M. Spitzer was a genius in his own line. A native of Cologne and of very humble birth , he settled in Paris , became a dealer in works of art and rose from the lowest to the highest rung of the social ladder. He owed the great fortune he amassed to his activity and cleverness, ferreting out the best things , buying them at the smallest and selling them at the biggest prices , playing off his clients against each other and turning the ignorance of some of them to good account. His emissaries travelled over the whole Continent . In time he became so well known, and in later years was such a liberal buyer that works of art poured into his hands from every quarter of the globe. It will ,perhaps , be best to observe a discreet silence as to the operations which first brought grist to his mill. To say that he was unscrupulous would be using a mild term , though he was straight enough when it served his purpose. It will not be casting undue obloquy on his memory , however, to repeat here what is well known - namely, that out of one fine old work of art he manufactured two or three, and that he was able to fasten them on credulous amateurs by laying great stress on what was genuine in them , and ignoring what was not . In time the pauper German became a French swell, lived in great style in the Avenue du Bois de Boulogne, entertained Princes and Ambassadors, and magnificently doing the honours of his collection for them . This collection was sold

after his death and fetched four hundred thousand pounds.

No offer , no blandishments ever induced M. Spitzer to part with any object when once it had been placed and exhibited in his hotel . He would not have himself considered a dealer, but there were some secret recesses in his private chamber where many a fine work of art found a temporary home , vanishing mysteriously to reappear in some other collection . Never, not even when he was a professional dealer , did I succeed in making a deal with him - perhaps because he distrusted my discretion , and I must confess that to some extent he had cause for this distrust . In my youthful days I had been offered a Louis XVI mantelpiece by Mr Phillips, one of the 'bande noire', and which my cousin Adolphe soon afterwards purchased of M. Spitzer for double the amount Phillips had asked of me . On seeing it in my cousin's house in Paris I could not resist the temptation of telling him my prior acquaintance with and refusal of the mantelpiece . My cousin's anger was great but M. Spitzer's was greater , and he roundly abused me for my want of reserve , and for the harm I had done him in my cousin's estimation . I assured M. Spitzer that in future I should bridle my tongue , and I have kept my word ever since , to him as well as to other dealers.

I have said that I never succeeded in making a deal with M. Spitzer . The exception perhaps may be taken as proving the rule , and unfortunately for myself I have to record an exception to therule . It came about in this way. Though I disliked his overbearing manner, parvenu tone and underhand methods , I had a sneaking regard for M. Spitzer for I wasattracted

by his intelligence . His first ambition was to be taken for a gentleman and in his opinion , one shared by most persons of his class, the outward sign of a gentleman was the display of a string of decorations in the buttonhole of his coat . He already possessed several of these but he was anxious to add to their number . It happened one day that under the influence of his seductive talk , I said that I would exert myself to obtain for him one or two more of these coveted distinctions - a promise made in haste and repented at leisure . His joy was great and theexuberance of his gratitude was unbounded , so unbounded that he promised me the offer of his next important purchase in return for my good offices in the matter of the decorations . Being on intimate terms with some of the Foreign Ministers accredited to our Court, I had no difficulty in redeeming my promise , and realising his expectations to his heart's content.

True to his word,on his next visit to Londonhe brought me a large enamelled jewel of the sixteenth century . Being then in funds and anxious to form a collection of sixteenth century work , but being still rather inexperienced and , to boot, of a confiding disposition , I purchased the jewel without examining it as carefully as I should have done , and , it is almost needless to say , at an extravagant price. When , some years later I had acquired more knowledge of sixteenth century art I discovered that the jewel was'made up' , and that I had been handsomely 'done' - but by that time M. Spitzer was wearing his decorations in heaven , while I was left to reflect on the guilefulness of human nature , a wiser

though a sadder man .

During the last years of his life my Father grew more catholic in his taste and he bought freely at the great sales in Paris. ' How was it,' I once asked him ,'that in the days when you had such facilities for acquiring almost anything you chose and at your own price , you made so few purchases ?! 'I was less keen than I am now, ' he replied, ' and there was less emulation.' Yet even when he had no lack of emulation he could never be induced to pander to the new fashion for eighteenth century art. Nor would he ever lead the same luxurious existence as did his relatives in England and France . Of true Spartan simplicity , he retained indelibly the impressions of his youth , and had a wholesome horror of a smart house. In Vienna he lived in two small rooms which were hung with penny paper and furnished in the simplest style; and he hardly ever set foot in the suite of reception apartments which were opened on the rare occasions only of a 'dinner'. His own two rooms communicated with the 'museum' , where he spent many a happy hour, puffing away at his cigar, and making the catalogue of his collection in the company of one Plach , an Austrian dealer, who had taken Professor Oppenheim's place in a way, proving far less useful, so far , at any rate, as the acquisition of works of art was concerned.

Of my own career as an art collector I have little to record of interest . The first important acquisition I made was in I86I - a Sévres turquoise 'ship' from Mr Barker. He had bought it many years previously from a Neapolitan dealer who

had had it from the Prince of Salerno, a member of the Royal House of Naples to whose ancestor it had been given by Louis XV. I was unable to pay ready money for this piece of china, the best I possess, and blush to have to confess that I discharged my debt in instalments extending over two years, paying interest meanwhile on the capital sum. During these two years I hid the 'ship' in a cabinet, afraid to own it lest I should be scolded for my extravagance by my Uncles, of whom I stood in great awe.

Mr Alexander Barker was a very remarkable character, not unlike M. Spitzer in some respects but very superior to him in others. He began life as an apprentice to a bootmaker, and I have known some persons whom he measured for their boots. I am not acquainted with the transition period of his career and only know that he laid the foundations of his fortune and position by procuring Italian pictures and furniture for the Duke of Northumberland and the late Lord Dudley. He soon fell out, however, with the latter. Italy was his happy hunting ground, and after every journey to that favoured country he returned with huge cases containing marbles, carvings and paintings of great excellence. He was recommended to my Uncle Baron Meyer, who in I847 had purchased his estate of Mentmore and was about to build a large house, of which Sir Joseph Paxton was the architect while Mr Barker became the decorator. It was at Mentmore while on a short visit to London in I857 that I first met him. The large dining-room was being inaugurated, speeches were made, Mr Barker's health and mine were

given , and great was both his and my nervousness on having to reply. He well deserved the compliment he received for he purveyed most of the fine works of art at Mentmore, amongst them the pictures from the Manfrini collection at Venice, mentioned by Byron in 'Childe Harold'.

When I bought my turquoise 'ship' Mr Barker was already a great personage, residing at I03 Piccadilly in the most luxurious manner, driving the best steppers, giving the best dinners, and entertaining the best society . His taste was as fastidious as it was good and I shall never forget his saying , on showing me some beautiful roses that had been sent up from his hunting-box - 'Whatever I have is the best , were I to have a jackass , it would be the best jackass in England.' Most uncouth in appearance, slovenly and untidily dressed in loose clothes that were never fitted, unable to manage his h's, and devoid of all sense of personal comfort - he burned gas in his fire-places instead of coal or wood - the whilom bootmaker ate his cutlets from Sévres china, sipped his '48 claret from Venetian glass, Bouchers and Fragonards studded his walls and Gouthières cabinets stood round his room . Like M. Spitzer he served his good customers honestly but as a rule he tampered with his goods, playing tricks with and 'improving' them ,often to their serious detriment but more often still to the detriment of their purchasers. He would not readily deal with me for fear of offending his other clients , but I invariably found him kind and goodnatured.

When I bought the 'ship' I have already mentioned I also got from him a pair of turquoise Sèvres vases which he

offered to take back at any time at the same price as that at which he sold them to me . I was aware even when I bought them that these Sèvres vases were of an inferior quality, but I kept them as they made a good set with the 'ship' as a centre piece. In I87I , ten years later, I acquired another and a better pair of turquoise vases from M. Oger, and Sèvres then being in great demand I disposed of Mr Barker's pair to Mr Wertheimer, who took them over to Paris and sold them to my cousin Gustave. The transaction had hardly been completed,and Mr Wertheimer was gleefully rubbing his hands in his hotel when he was summoned by telephone to my cousin's residence . His amazement was great and his annoyance was greater still when my enraged cousin turned over one of the vases and pointed out Minton's trade mark engraved on its foot. During the ten years they had been in my house the vases had been repeatedly subjected to a good sponging, yet I had never noticed the mark , and careful as he generally was Mr Wertheimer had in this instance neglected to examine the china. He might have surmised, however, that I should not have parted with the vases had I been satisfied with their quality. The vases themselves were genuine although I believe they had been repainted, but that one false foot proved fatal . Mr Wertheimer had no choice but to take them back, though he contrived soon afterwards to plant them on a Paris dealer at a reduced figure, and being unwilling to inflict a loss on Mr Wertheimer I consented to take a lower sum than the one I was to receive. And so this little affair ended to the satisfaction of all parties concerned , by whom the vases since then have always been spoken of as ' the telephone

vases'.

Private collections of works of art throughout the world have been subjected as a rule to chequered experiences, and they have seldom remained for any great length of time in the hands of those by the expenditure of whose love and labour they have been formed. To go back to the sixteenth century. In France Marshal de St. André , a contemporary of Catherine de Medicis, possessed chateaux and palaces filled with the choicest works of art of the time, but they were all scattered after his death . Mazarin's art treasures , the most numerous and splendid a private individual ever amassed since the days of Imperial Rome, were inherited in part by the King and in part by the Cardinal's nephew. The latter a maniac and a religious fanatic mutilated a gallery of statues, while he paid little heed to the remainder of his bequest . Madame de Pompadour's collection came next in importance . Her brother the Marquis de Marigny sent it to the auction room immediately after her death , and some idea of its magnitude may be gained from the fact that the sale lasted a year . The collections of

the Fermiers Generaux and those of many French noblemen were also disposed of as soon as their originators were in their graves. At the Duc d'Aumont's sale Marie Antoinette purchased a pair of wonderful Gouthières wall-lights , six feet tall, at a very high price . They afterwards found their way to Russia , then came to England where they were bought by the late Lord Tweedmouth , who eventually disposed of them to my cousin Edmond Rothschild. During the French Revolution , churches, monasteries, chateaux, and houses were ruthlessly pillaged, and the majority of the works of art which had been accumulated at Versailles during the reigns of the three Louis were either flung out of the windows or were sold by auction . I may mention casually that the large paintings by Boucher and Lemoine now at Hertford House once adorned the private apartments of Louis XV. Louis XVI however on his accession to the throne objected to them because of the nudity of some of the figures in them, and gave an order for their removal . One of his Ministers took them to his house , but they were seized and sold by the Revolutionary Government, they afterwards changed hands and ultimately crossed the Channel to England .

During this century the pictures of the Duc de Choiseul which his widow sold to pay his debts , as well as the pictures of the Duc d'Orleans and M. de Calonne were brought to the hammer in England. The Orleans gallery was privately acquired by the Lords Sutherland, Carlisle, and Bridegwater, who after having reserved a certain number for themselves sold the remainder for a sum that covered what they had paid for the entire collection. Bridgewater House still contains all the

pictures its founder had collected, but the collections of Castle Howard and Stafford House have not been preserved intact , the Duc d'Aumale having become the possessor of the old French portraits inherited by the then Duke of Sutherland, and the French miniatures of Lord Carlisle.

It is within the memory of the present generation that every collection formed in France during the earlier part of this century has been sold by auction , with the exception of those of my relations and of the late Duc d'Aumale. In Austria and Germany there were fewer private collections than in France and England , but every royal person had his accumulation of art treasures. These represented the personal tastes and idiosyncrasies of their owners and were valued accordingly. The Electors of Bavaria, Saxony and Hesse , for example , were patrons of the fine arts , while other princes cultivated a taste for stuffed animals or mineralogical specimens. Rodolph II who reigned from I576 to I6I2 was an enthusiastic lover both of old and contemporary art, purchasing antiques and early renaissance objects in Italy and employing Italian goldsmiths to carry out his commissions under his own supervision . His collection at Prague was looted during the Thirty Years War, but the catalogue has been preserved . Part of this collection now enriches the Green Vaults at Dresden while a shield of exquisite beauty from it is in the possession of Count Brahe in Sweden , and two small boxwood busts - the presentments of Charles the Bold and his Consort Elizabeth of York - are in mine. They were accidentally discovered by Mr Boehm , father of the late sculptor, at Prague where he saw some children using

them as playthings and acquired them from their parents for a song . My Father purchased them at the sale of Mr Boehm's effects .

In Vienna the picture galleries of Prince Liechtenstein and Counts Czernin and Harrach are still intact , but that of Count Erwin Schönborn has been considerably reduced , while Prince Esterhazy bequeathed his pictures to the town of Pesth . The Wars of Napoleon caused the destruction of many works of art, for the patriotic Austrian nobility sent their plate to the mint to help their country in its hour of need. We can still judge , if not of its quality , which may be taken for granted, yet of its quantity, from the number and size of the old stamped leather cases made for its reception , which are still in existence . The treasures of the Imperial Schaltzkammer now in the Museum at Vienna narrowly escaped the fate of the rest. These ,too , were to be melted down to pay the soldiers when the Keeper forced his way into the presence of the Emperor Francis I , threw himself at his feet , and begged the monarch to spare them on the plea that their intrinsic was insignificant compared to their artistic value .

In Hungary there are still a few collections of fine old plate, those of Prince Esterhazy and Count Erdödy in particular, but the number is small, and though there are some remarkably fine examples of old goldsmith's work in the monasteries and the palaces of the bishops, they are mere isolated specimens and are not collections in the true sense of the word. The same remark applies to Germany where there were few private

collections of importance , and I have already mentioned that of Count Schönborn of Pommersfeld as having been dispersed.

For the last three centuries Italy has been the happy hunting ground of European collectors , and if we except the collection of Count Trivulzio in Milan and some few well known galleries in Rome , no private collections now exist in that country . The jealous vigilance of the Italian Government which forbids the exportation of old works of art , or the alienation of their entailed pictures by the Roman princes, have preserved their galleries to some extent. But still, under the stress of financial difficulties the owners of these treasures have contrived to elude the law , and some of the finest canvases from the Sciarra and Borghese Palaces have recently crossed the Alps.

Until the beginning of the present century Holland was rich in private collections of the Old masters of the Dutch school , but the only one of these collections that still survives is that of Baron Six Von Winter, and even that has been shorn of some of its gems . Spain has long been an impoverished country but even in the days of her greatest prosperity she produced no artists of superlative merit , if we except two painters and a few sculptors of reredos. Charles V and Philip II imported many works of art from Flanders and from Italy , but most of these were destroyed or taken away during the Napoleonic Wars , when the entire contents of the Escurial were looted and carried off by the French soldiers. Georges Sand, who passed part of her youth in Madrid, relates how she and other children had fine works of art for toys . The Royal

Galleries of Madrid fortunately escaped the vandalism of those warlike days and they justly rank among the foremost in Europe for the wealth and quality of their contents . But the masterpieces of Spanish art, with the exception of those in the Museum and in some of the Cathedrals as well as a few ecclesiastical houses , have left the country . Marshal Soult carried away twenty Murillos rolled up in the barrels of his field guns. There are still sundry private collections in the hands of Spanish grandees, but in all probability they will remain there, as , being replicas or contemporary copies they are of little value and offer no temptation to the collector.

In England the Royal collections at Buckingham Palace and Windsor Castle and the National collections in London are equal to if not superior to any collection in Europe. Still, the Royal collections , are , so to speak , but the fragments of what they once were . Henry VIII , Queen Elizabeth , and Mary Tudor were munificent patrons of the arts, and Charles I employed agents in all parts of the Continent in the acquisition of the choicest works of every style . It is well known that the greater portion of these treasures were sold by order of Cromwell, and that many private collections suffered grievously as well during the Rebellion , as the Royalists sent their plate to the mint and the Roundheads paid little respect to the castles they captured . The gaps Cromwell left at Windsor and Whitehall were supplied by George III , who collected pictures and rare books , and by George IV who was an enthusiastic lover of French art.

Thus , to some extent at least , the loss of the I6th

century objects was compensated by the addition by these monarchs of those of the seventeenth and eighteenth . The mass of gold and silver plate likewise which belonged to the churches and monasteries disappeared during the Reformation , but the Universities and some of the Corporations* were able to preserve most of theirs , though it is to be regretted that this has suffered largely by being re-gilt and 'made up' , and has consequently lost not only much of its value but of its beauty as well. Yet , on the whole, it cannot be denied that England is unrivalled in the magnificence and variety of its accumulations of old works of art. Nor is this to be wondered at, for she has long been the wealthiest country in the world and has been able to indulge all her tastes. But though it might be supposed that for this reason that her private collections would have been exposed less than those of other countries to the freaks of fortune , they have not , nevertheless, been exempt from the mutability of all things human , circumstances being stronger than personal wishes or inclinations .

So long as the law of entail was rigorously enforced , her ancestral families retainedtheir collections , but after the passing of Lord Cairns' Act the process of disintegration set in , which Sir William Harcourt's revision of the death duties must inevitably accelerate . At the time Sir William Harcourt's Bill was being debated in Parliament I ventured to observe to him that if passed unamended its result would be the loss to England of some of her finest works of art, as they

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*The Goldsmith's Company twice sold their plate ; the second time after the Fire of London- to recoup their losses in house property.

would be sold to Continental buyers. But he contended that England , being the richest country in Europe , these artistic objects would still remain here, although possibly they might change hands. I demurred to this view on the ground that the great fortunes in England had passed away from the class which possessed the valuable works of art, that on the Continent most rich men were more ardent collectors than the new rich men in England , that the Continental Museums , that of Berlin especially, were more munificently subsidised than are our National Museums , and that consequently our artistic treasures must necessarily gravitate , and in fact were actually gravitating into foreign hands. But he shook his head and remained sceptical . Some few weeks later , when Sir William happened to be staying with me in the country, we again broached the topic , and he was still steadfast in his opinion . A member of the party, however, whose professional experience enabled him to speak with more authority than I could , stated that during the last decade or two upwards of fifty Rembrandts alone had been exported - and Sir William had to give in . For this recent dispersal of art treasures the agricultural depress ion , which began suddenly in I875, has been largely respons- ible. Many an impoverished landlord was reluctantly compelled to part with his pictures and cabinets to maintain his family, and they freely availed as a class of the facilities the new laws afforded them for that purpose.

Yet, the plea of impecuniosity so often put forward cannot always be sustained. Singular as it may appear, it is nevertheless a fact that the taste for old art which for so

long prevailed among most of the members of the great houses of this country has now almost vanished. Not a few who might have preserved their heirlooms,parted with them to purchase race-horses or yachts, or to indulge in the fashionable amusements of the day . Despite the law of atavism the same tastes are not always transmitted through generations of the same family either directly or at intervals. Prevalent as it at present is, the mania for old art has shifted from the descendants of the old to the founders of the new families , who owing to the greater means at their command have been enabled to possess themselves of many of the treasures which for long periods had remained in undisturbed security.

It would be erroneous, however, to imagine that art sales were unknown in England before the agricultural depression or until the Cairns' Act came into operation - though these events gave a great impetus to this means of replenishing depleted fortunes. Many important collections were thrown on the market when I was still a child in arms. Lord Stuart de Rothesay's collection of pictures was sold in I84I; the historical relics and curiosities which Horace Walpole had spent a long life in gathering together for his beloved Strawberry Hill were put up to auction in the following year ; and in I848 began the dismantling of Stowe, the palatial residence of the Duke of Buckingham whose reckless extravagance had brought him into the Bankruptcy Court. His ambition was to be without rivals or neighbours in his county , and to gratify that desire he bought up all the estates of the latter and pulled down their houses,But to accomplish this whim he was

obliged to raise money at a high rate of interest , and the clay lands of Buckinghamshire yielded a meagre return for his investment. This may have been magnificent but it was not businessand the crash , though long delayed , was inevitable. at Lord Stuart de Rothesay's sale , and at those of Strawberry Hill and Stowe, the prices were moderate compared to later experience . Lord Stuart's 'Standard Bearer' by Rembrandt was knocked down at £800, while in I868 it was valued at £I0000 for probate duty .

The first sale I can remember was that of Mr Bernal's collection in I854 or '55 , and it was the one at which sensational prices were first given , by Lord Hertford chiefly, who purchased six Sèvres vases at a figure that revolutionised the market . I may mention that he gave these vases to Mdlle. Oger who , after his death in I870, placed them in the hands of a broker from whom two years later they were acquired by my cousin Baron Alphonse and myself. It is true that the collections of Lord Stuart and Mr Bernal as well as those of which the sale has recently taken place were not ancient collections in the true sense of the word, nor was even that of Horace Walpole. But there were many others which it would be tedious to enumerate , which had long been in the hands of the families by which they were sold.

But be this as it may, not all the collections which have been scattered either in whole or in part during the past fifty years have been disposed of by auction, as many have changed hands privately. This can be accounted for in many ways. Some collectors dread the publicity of the press and

will not bid at a sale beyond a certain point, but to obtain a much coveted article privately they will give even an unreasonable price . Therefore it often happens that sums are offered for works of art by private treaty , which their owners be they ever so reluctant to part with them find it impossible to resist . There are persons also who not to run the risk of a 'knock-out' will dispose of their valuables privately , and others who though certain of a brisk competition will gladly take a comparatively moderate cheque from a dealer to be spared the exposure, the gossip , and the ill-natured comments of the auction room . Many a gentleman's pride suffers grievously when he sees his grandmother's portrait, perhaps, handled by unfeeling strangers , or subjected to the cruel stare of an idle throng, while the reasons which compel him to barter it away are being canvassed and made known to the world at large. But his feelings are spared by the discreet dealer who , moreover, provides an excellent copy which is hung in the place of the original , fills the gap on the wall, prevents awkward questions, and all things considered answers as well. The public sale of an antique piece of plate would make a stir and may be offend sensitive relations , whereas the family may be appeased or squared on condition that it is disposed of to a dealer and a promise given that it shall be taken to Paris or New York where it will not be recognised. As it has rarely emerged from the plate closet it will not be missed and a 'tip' seals the lips of the butler. Old cabinets are unpractical and useless , a sofa or a bookstand is much more needed. The keen eye of some friend or the enquiring mind of a visitor can be

deceived by a replica which is easily and cheaply obtained. And as for old china ! Think of the peril to which it is exposed by the housemaid's duster or the housekeeper's soap . Far better to get a pair of vases or a service at Minton's and let the old one go before it is smashed. On all these occasions vendors and buyers hold their tongues , and the world progresses as satisfactorily as it did before the sale.

Could old works of art be acquired in the auction room only , commission agents would prosper but Bond Street would have to go into mourning . This might not be a national calamity , and I for one should not shed many bitter tears. It is true that I am indebted to dealers for most of the works of art on the possession of which I pride myself. I shall not even grumble at the profits they made out of me , but I do lament the fact that in these transactions the person who most needed it benefited least . Occasionally the owner of some fine article drives a good bargain but as a rule he falls an easy prey to the astute tradesman, who is not much troubled by conscience and sets no limit to the intrigues on which he enters or the romances he fabricates to assist him in the accomplishment of his design . The mind of the dealer is fertile in resources and in ingenious devices , and he well knows what particular device the occasion renders it advisable to employ. If the owner of the article he covets , but may have some difficulty in securing, be of a timid or nervous disposition then instead of argument or persuasion he uses strong language, shouts at him as if he were deaf , and rushes him so impetuously that rather than stand the ordeal any longer the owner submits and sells. Some persons are of a credulous and

confiding turn of mind and believe implicitly what the dealer tells them . On seeing a cabinet or a vase in such a one's house the dealer says he knows the very companion of it in the hands of one of his clients , who , to make a pair would give a far price than could otherwise be obtained , and the owner is caught in the trap partly by his desire to please the dealer and partly to please his client . Another favourite trick with a dealer is to pretend to the owner that his works of art are not placed to advantage, and then beg permission to be allowed to rearrange them . He zealously sets to work , but takes care to eliminate the one article on which he has fixed his greedy eye. Having completed his labours he carelessly remarks that he will be glad to relieve his host of the incubus, and the latter is so well pleased with the improved arrangement that he too is victimised.

I remember a case in which a dealer gave a remarkable proof of his adroitness and craft . To recruit after an arduous season in London he hired a furnished house at a watering place for the autumn . There , put away in a remote corner he discovered a magnificent garniture of Sèvres vases. He kept his discovery to himself , but after a time he loudly proclaimed that the air of this particular watering place suited him and his children so well that he would visit it every autumn , and as the house answered his requirements perfectly he entered into negotiations for its purchase , together with all its contents . The negotiations were concluded to the satisfaction of all parties concerned , but as soon as the contract was signed the dealer found out that after all the air was not so

beneficial as he had fancied nor the house as convenient as he had imagined it to be . So he sold it again at cost price with its contents - all but the Sèvres vases , out of which he made a large sum .

Soon after this experience of watering place life the dealer was favoured with a still greater piece of good fortune. It came to his knowledge that a worthy citizen of London , a retired dentist, living somewhere near Regent's Park, possessed a pair of china vases . He obtained an introduction to the house and was amazed at the sight of a pair of Sèvres vases which were of still greater beauty than those which had come so unexpectedly into his hands during his holiday . The dentist who knew more of the merits of ivory than of 'soft paste' was only too glad to be rid of the vases , and parted with them for a trifling amount . In fact on receiving his cheque which had been made out in guineas , he returned the shillings saying that he could not think of taking more than pounds for articles for which he cared so little.

All sales arranged by private treaty are not necessarily made on the quiet. Purchases made for instance on behalf of the National Gallery are of public notoriety . Numerous and important as these have been , those of Blenheim and Longford Castle especially, that of the late Sir Robert Peel's collection of pictures surpassed alike in quality and quantity any transaction that has taken place in this century either at home or abroad. These pictures which his father the great Minister had brought together with exquisite judgment , Sir Robert, when he decided to sell them, first offered to my Uncle

Lionel , mentioning that in the event of his refusal he would offer them at the same price to the nation . My Uncle, however would not entertain the notion of so vast a transaction . Sir Robert subsequently declined a magnificent offer from a foreign dealer , nor could he be induced to send the pictures to Christies though he was assured by competent experts that they would there realise a far greater sum than he considered them to be worth , and much to his credit , remaining proof against all temptation , to the nation the pictures went. To judge , not from the prices which the old Dutch Masters have recently fetched , but from the prices given for those which came into the market at that time , it may be confidently asserted that Sir Robert received for his collection about one-third of its then value .

Collectors may deplore the fact but it should be a source of gratification to the public,that most fine works of art drift slowly but surely into museums and public galleries. In private hands they can afford delight to only a small number of persons . Take even the case of our large country houses whose proprietors generously allow them to be visited on certain days . These are accessible to a limited circle . Moreover they run the risk of fire or other damage . Belvoir Castle, Ingestre Hall, Crewe Hall , and many other historic mansions have been burned down and with them many of their priceless contents have been destroyed . I can speak from experience , having suffered the loss of Gainsborough's 'Two Sisters which was consumed in a fire caused by the carelessness of some workmen. In a museum pictures find a safe refuge , and

they are accessible to the general public. Though not blessed with much artistic sense or endowed with much refinement or discrimination , the masses take great pleasure in spending an afternoon gazing on the presentments of their national heroes and heroines , and , though perhaps in a minor degree, on Egyptian , Greek , or Roman antiquities , and the graceful compositions of the French eighteenth century . And besides being a source of pleasure to the masses they serve a valuable educational purpose. Our great artists go to museums for fresh inspiration , while the struggling members of the craft find in them the only means of improving their knowledge and taste, they can study there the models they desire to copy, and are provided with the standards by which they can measure their own efforts. To architects, skilled workmen, cabinet makers, even to dressmakers and hairdressers , a museum affords a source of new ideas which never fails. Finally it may be said that museums preserve works of art for the countries which have long been their home . Of late , we in England have had too many examples of great works crossing the Channel not to rejoice that they should be no longer exposed to the predatory raids of the foreigner. Still the foreigner on his side may say that as during the last two or three centuries the bulk of our most valuable works of art were imported from abroad it is only fair that they should go back to the lands from whence they came and to which they owed their existence . Still we can only derive a poor consolation from that reflection .It is possible that some few of those which are now leaving our shores may once more find their way back again , but those

which are acquired for the United States are unlikely ever to recross the Atlantic.

The ink is barely dry on the words I have been writing when the announcement comes to hand of the bequest to the nation by his widow,of the late Sir Richard Wallace's - formerly Lord Hertfords - collection . No country has ever had such a windfall, for great as may be its pecuniary value its artistic value is inestimable . In the six or seven hundred pictures it contains there is not one that is not of the highest excellence. The same may almost be said of the furniture, the china ,and the numerous decorative objects, which even in point of mere number exceed those of any other collection either public or private. It would have been a source of the keenest disappointment and regret had this collection been dispersed and sent abroad,or if it had gone into the hands of our millionaires, whose desire to adorn their walls with the masterpieces of English and foreign artists may be praiseworthy and legitimate,but which would in this case have caused a disastrous loss to the general public.

I saw Lord Hertford only once in my life and I have little to say of him that is not already well known, as the career and the eccentricities of that very original personage have been exhaustively described in every variety of print. He was pointed out to me at Prince Beauveau's sale in Paris in I86 , sitting beside his alter ego M.Richard on a front bench in a stuffy room in the Hotel Drouot. I should have noticed him of my own accord , for he possessed that certain unmistakable 'something' which denotes the 'somebody' and attracts

attention . He was very un-English in appearance, having inherited the sallow complexion and the bright dark eyes of his Italian mother , Mdlle. Fagniani, a lady of questionable notoriety and to whose parentage the Duke of Queensberry - 'Old Q. - and George Selwyn each put forward conflicting claims.

The sensational article of the day was a Marie Antoinette lacquer table with Gouthières mounts - sensational because it had become known that the Empress Eugenie in her passionate admiration for the 'Martyr Queen' had set her heart on its possession , but which the Marquis , as he was shortly and generally called in Paris, would not be deterred from acquiring. It was said soon after the sale that Lord Hertford presented the table as a gift to the Empress, but I doubt the truth of the report. I once thought I saw it at Manchester House , but could not find it on another occasion , and have never been able to ascertain whether the table I saw was the original or a replica , or merely the result of a mental hallucination , nor whether it is still in the possession of the Empress or was destroyed when the Tuileries was burnt down during the Commune.

Critical epochs produce eminent men and eminent men make history . The first portion of this century was a critical epoch in the history of art. For several centuries Italy and France had sent forth the artists under whose guidance the rest of the civilised world had fashioned its taste , or to whose genius it owed the development of its art . But the French Revolution and the Wars of Napoleon had killed off the then Italian and French artists and their pupils , who were

compelled to drop the chisel and the brush to shoulder the musket ; while the terrible cares and the momentous issues involved in those struggles thrust artistic culture into the background . During the reign of Louis XVIII and his successor France was occupied in putting her house in order , and so could not give her thoughts to the encouragement of art.

Ever since Prince ~~Corunna~~ Colonna in order to equip a regiment to fight against the Corsican conqueror sent to the mint a service of gold plate made for one of his ancestors by Cellini, architecture, sculpture and painting in the land of Giotto have been an irony. Rut in France art revived with the accession of the Orleans dynasty , and execrable as was the taste of the Bourgeois King still he fostered the new birth , and by his patronage gave an impetus to a new school of painting which in time shed a brilliant lustre on his reign . Then , collectors of the jewels, enamels, and carvings of bygone epochs, which are now so eagerly sought for but which had been neglected or tabooed until then, again appeared. But the art of the French eighteenth century continued to be ignored until Lord Hertford brought it into prominence and worldwide repute. Had it not been for him the cabinets , porcelain and even the paintings of that period might have remained some time longer in the limbo to which they had been consigned by the Revolution . In England it is true they were appreciated , but only by a limited circle , and it was due to Lord Hertford that they gained their new importance and fame, and that thenceforth they have served as models and sources of inspiration to the artists and decorators of all Europe.

That day must probably have come in any case, for their merits and their value could scarcely have failed to have been recognised even had Lord Hertford never been born . But whoever inaugurated the new movement must needs have been endowed with precisely the qualifications possessed by him , and our appreciation of his work must not be lessened by the fact that he had every essential for success in the enterprise he undertook. It has been said of many a maker of history that were it not for the favouring conditions of his time that the laurels he gathered would never even have grown . But those who minimise the achievements of remarkable men should not forget that true genius lies in being able to take full advantage of opportunity. Lord Hertford certainly lived in days when the rage for eighteenth century art was still in its infancy, when the supply was practically inexhaustible, and when Paris where he resided was the centre of the art world. His means were to all intents and purposes unlimited, and the cost of his establishment was small. But even allowing for these advantages it must still be admitted that no other collector seemed to possess the peculiar faculties necessary for the accomplishment of the great work Lord Hertford undertook .

In the first place he loved , and was the first to love the productions of the French eighteenth century, and thought not the less highly of them because they were plentiful and easily obtained . In the second place , he had been cradled and nurtured amongst them, as his father - a collector himself- had been employed by the Prince Regent in filling Carlton House with the spoils of the Revolution . He had no serious

occupations to engross his thoughts or to divert him from the pursuit of the one aim of his life , for he troubled himself little with the affairs of his native land or the management of his properties. He gladly allowed his ante-room in the Rue Laffitte or at Bagatelle to be crowded with all sorts and conditions of persons , who brought him their valuables , and whose offers he liberally responded to; he knew how to select and train the agents who attended the sale rooms on his behalf, where no competitor could stand in his way as with him price was no object ; and if like a second Alladdin he filled his galleries with countless objects of which each is a treasure, it was because of his power of concentration, his perfect judgment, and his exquisite taste .

Unstinted praise cannot , however , be accorded to Lord Hertford, for it may be questioned whether his love of art did not degenerate into a mania and whether he went on amassing pictures, furniture and china , for the pleasure their possession gave him in the artistic sense, or from less creditable motives. He never saw many of the objects his agents purchased as they were forwarded from the place they were bought direct to Manchester House , and for several years before his death he did not set foot in London ; while of those he personally acquired a great number were at once piled up in the lumber room. The late Count Bylandt, sometime Netherlands Minister in London , was fond of relating a story which is not without a moral in this connection . One day a friend of Lord Hertford told him that he should not fail to secure a beautiful

Watteau which was then , he said , for sale in Ireland. The Marquis at once sent off an agent to Ireland in search of the picture , but he returned crestfallen as it had already been disposed of. The Marquis would not , however, be beaten , and the unfortunate messenger was ordered to cross the Irish Channel once more , to trace the picture , and to obtain it regardless of cost . After a long Odyssey he returned with the tidings that the Watteau was hanging safely on the walls of Manchester House. It had been bought long before for Lord Hertford.

Another story may be repeated also to some purpose as showing that Lord Hertford bought at times from mere ostentation or jealousy . The Duchesse de Berry , the heroine of the Vendée ,had a collection of fine Dutch pictures in her palace at Venice, where she resided after the fall of the Bourbons. This collection , owing to her reduced circumstances , she offered at a most reasonable figure to Lord Hertford. But Lord Hertford declined the offer, and the Duchess then sold them to Prince Demidoff who was also a great collector. After Prince Demidoff's death they came under the hammer in Paris and Lord Hertford then bought three or four of them at a far higher price than he had been originally asked for the entire collection .

One more story I must relate of him , as it well illustrates the strange vagaries of which a man , however highminded and accomplished , is sometimes capable. The late Lord Dudley was well known in his generation as a munificent collector. At first he confined himself to the collection of pictures but

subsequently he went in for furniture and porcelain, and was to a great extent responsible for the rise in the price of old English and Sèvres china , the selling value of which fell considerably after his death . He occasionally consulted Lord Hertford, with whom he was on very intimate terms , on his projected purchases . In I86 he went with Lord Hertford to the private view of the Pourtalès collection where he admired a Greuze - a girl holding a lamb. He said he would very much like to have the picture and asked his friend how much it would be likely to fetch at the sale , and what figure he would advise him to go to for it. 'There is no telling,'replied Lord Hertford,' but you may go up to £4000.' They attended the sale together. The picture came up in due course and though an exquisite example of the master it excited but little competition , and would have been knocked down to Lord Dudley's bid of £I400 when Lord Hertford stepped in and offered , not £I500, but £4000, making this extravagant and most unjustifiable bid to show that he meant to have the picture. Lord Dudley saw that he had been fooled , and sensibly withdrew from the contest.

Lord Hertford's right-hand-man was the then Monsieur Richard, whose mysterious origin has given rise to various but never to any satisfactory explanation . The idea that long prevailed that he was Lord Hertford's son cannot be maintained for he was only seventeen years younger than his reputed father. There is more plausibility in the assumption that he was the illegitimate offspring of Lord Hertford's mother, for the words that Caesar applied to his wife could not be applied to that lady . Moreover that explanation of his birth tallies

as well as the other with the fact, that there was an unmistakable likeness between the two men - though that , too, might have been accounted for by their life-long companionship, and the perhaps unconscious desire of the younger to copy the manners and ways of the elder. Whatever the ties may have been that connected them, Lord Hertford never showed any deference to or consideration for M. Richard, as he was called in Paris, or Mr Wallace , the name he went by in England. Lord Hertford treated him not like a relation or a friend , but like a dependent, making him stand in his presence and giving him a seat on the box of his cab when he used that mode of locomotion . Probably no one was more surprised than M. Richard himself when he heard that Lord Hertford had constituted him his sole legatee. The peculiar character of the testator may afford a sufficient clue to the motive of this action , as for reasons best known to himself Lord Hertford detested all his relations and begrudged them the slightest advantage from his death . It would be hard to believe that he was actuated by the more noble sentiment of wishing to reward the devotion of one,the best years of whose life had been spent in his service . It may have been that like some other collectors Lord Hertford was anxious that his collection should pass into the hands of one who could be trusted to preserve it in its entirety, and bestow on it the care it deserved.

For to M. Richard Lord Hertford was indebted for not a small proportion of his works of art, nor the least valuable of them . The knowledge and taste of the pupil were equal to those of the master ; and , indefatigable in his exertions ,

M. Richard was ubiquitous. Whenever there was a public sale on the Continent, M. Richard was on the spot ; when some special object was to be obtained in England , Mr Wallace appeared. His judgment was impeccable, and his proceedings always gave complete satisfaction to his employer - at least always except once .

M. Richard in his younger days to supplement his not abundant means went in for speculation on the Bourse, successfully at first but disastrously in the long run . Lord Hertford came to the rescue , but to meet some of the losses M. Richard had incurred he insisted on the sale of a small collection of works of art the latter had started on his own account. Henceforth M. Richard neither gambled nor collected. So long as Lord Hertford lived M. Richard had to be content to play rather a humiliating part. He associated with the members of the dealing fraternity, was regarded by them as one of their own order, dined with and met them on equal terms. Yet he preserved a dignified reserve in their midst , as he also did when moving in other circles.

I had long been anxious to make his acquaintance, having been impressed by his distinguished appearance and having heard the most favourable accounts of all that concerned him ; but as I seldom went to Paris and knew none of his friends I was unable to obtain the desired introduction . The opportunity arose at last about the time of the Beauveau sale. I was looking at a collection that was on view at the Hotel Drouot when he entered the room , and I at once asked an English curiosity dealer who was at hand to introduce me to him . Whether from

an instinctive but exaggerated feeling of pride, or whether he was nettled at my having chosen a dealer as my intermediary ,he maintained a haughty silence and sullenly withdrew. I never met him again until he had blossomed out into an English baronet, a territorial magnate, the owner of Manchester House, and the guest of the Prince of Wales. On our second introduction at a smoking party at Marlborough House we both ignored our previous acquaintance and soon made friends, for art was the strong magnet which drew us to each other. I often visited him afterwards and he never tired of showing me over his collection , doing the honours of it in the most delightful manner. It redounded greatly to his credit that having passed by a sudden transition from a subordinate position to one of the giddiest height , he always kept his head perfectly cool, proved himself thoroughly competent to deal with the most critical situations , and in all matters of art remained a dainty epicurean . He resisted every temptation to add to the pictures and eighteenth century furniture and porcelain he had inherited, being unable , as he often told me, to improve on their quality ; but for some years he bought old armour and sixteenth century enamels and carvings , as Lord Hertford never cared to acquire any specimens of that kind.

Soon after the Franco-German War my Uncle Lionel showed me some fine old Italian plate which had been brought over from Portugal and offered to him . I was especially struck by a richly chiselled gilt silver ewer and basin, a present from Pope Clement VII to a Portuguese grandee, and augured from my

Uncle's manner that he proposed to keep the consignment . I was on the eve of a journey to Vienna and on my return was much surprised on hearing that he had declined the offer , and on my next visit to Sir Richard Wallace saw the plate in one of his glass cases. Could I have foreseen my Uncle's decision I should certainly have endeavoured to secure it for my Father or myself.

No couple could have been more strangely assorted , as far as appearances went, than Sir Richard and Lady Wallace. She may have been beautiful in her youth but she had lost every vestige or trace of good looks in her maturity, while at no time could she have been remarkable for those higher intellectual gifts which more than beauty fascinate a man and hold him in bondage . A drive in the Bois de Boulogne, a dinner at a café,and an evening at a French theatre,were to the end of her days, of greater moment to her and a source of more enjoyment than conversation with clever and distinguished persons , in which , had she the inclination , she might have indulged. Her boudoir and bedrooms were crammed with the loveliest paintings of the French school and with cabinets which are perfect gems, but she made no secret of her detestation of her Greuzes and Paters , of her Sèvres vases and her 'bonheurs du jour', to obtain which many a collector would have imperilled his salvation . Sir Richard , whatever he may have thought , gaily made fun of his wife's peculiar idiosyncrasy . Once while I was admiring the contents of her private apartment he noticed my scared look on seeing a garish embroidered satin stand, fresh

from the Boulevards , planted in front of an exquisite china table. 'Yes,' he said with a smile,'this is the kind of thing that Lady Wallace likes best - there is no arguing about tastes.'

Considering the immeasureable debt of gratitude we owe Lady Wallace it would be unbecoming on my part to cast any insidious reflections on her memory. Nor is it for me to enquire into or criticize the nature of the influence she had on Sir Richard . Many eminent men , far more eminent than was Sir Richard wallace , have been subjected to the domination of women of the same class as that from which Lady Wallace sprang. We can but revere Sir Richard's constancy and the nobility of his conduct in having rewarded her devotion to him during the long years of his poverty and obscurity, by giving her his name and legitimising her son . Unfortunately nobility of conduct does not always bring the reward it deserves. She dragged him down to her level, clogged his whole future, and marred all his prospects , for society though willing to accept his hospitality and to shake hands with her under her own roof would not ask her in return . When he found its doors closed to his wife Sir Richard chivalrously declined to accept the invitations which were proferred to him only. Yet , it might be rash to assume that , beyond the sting to his pride, he felt much disappointment or regret over this state of things . The happiness of his home must have afforded him ample compensation for the loss of social amenities, which would have been shorn of all gratification unlessshared by her whose company was dearer to him than a solitary participation in the pomps and

vanities of the great world.

In shaping its destinies mankind seems to obey forces similar to those which govern the universe, and as our planet passes through slow but continual changes our civilisation rises and falls in ever-varying eddies. By their power of attraction and consolidation the Church and the Throne first quickened and developed the moral and social condition of the great masses of humanity, whose intellectual vitality, howver, they would have absorbed but for the centrifugal force of that ever-renascent and progressive energy to which we owe our reformations and our revolutions , our religious and civil liberties.

Art is a small factor in history , perhaps only an incident in it, yet it follows history in all its stages . So long as the Church and the Throne were the primary forces of civilisation it was the aim and the ambition of the artist to devote his genius to the adornment of Churches and Palaces , which he filled with all that was noblest and richest in art; but when the growth of the democracy destroyed the spell of the old influences it sent the artist adrift and carried away , scattering broadcast the old artistic accumulations of ages. A new centre of attraction has been formed on the ruins of the old, produced by the very action of the democracy.

If the artist no longer gravitates towards the Prelate and the Prince , he now does homage to the 'people', whom he idealises into an entity , competing for their patronage in

academies and exhibitions , while the artistic productions of the past turn to the same magnet and pass into the hands of the People in museums. Prince and private individual alike are swayed by the same impulse; the sovereign presents the works of art he has saved from the general wreck - though entitled to retain them for his own enjoyment - to the national museums of his country, while the citizen either founds such institutions or enriches them by donatíons or legacies. With the solitary exception of the bequest by Dr Tornow,a Prussian lawyer, of his collection to the Empress Frederick, not a single instance could be quoted of any ancient works of art having been left to a royal or ecclesiastical personage , while the bequests to the people , both in England and on the Continent have been innumerable. An illustration of thi development even more forcible than that of the Wallace bequest, was the bestowal on the French nation of the Palace of Chantilly with its contents and its 22000 acres of demesne, by the Duc d'Aumale, the news of whose death reaches me as I am writing.

The Duc d'Aumale was an exile when he made the announcement to which I have just referred , and the immediate result of which was that he was permitted to return to France . As a matter of course there were the usual detractors who sneered at his quixotic generosity. They said that his gift was merely intended to pave the way for the withdrawal of the proscription under which he suffered, and to ensure his possessions from confiscation . Calculations so mean, however, could hardly have influenced one whose whole life and whose every action had been

blameless and above suspicion . Moreover , his experience of the past must have told him that in times of renewed political trouble and effervescence his munificence would meet with but scant recognition at the hands of those whom he was so magnanimously benefiting. It was incomprehensible to the superficial observer that the son of a King who had been dethroned and banished, and who had been twice banished himself, the scion , moreover, of a race which after occupying the throne of France for ten centuries was now condemned to impotent obscurity, should lavish such favours on the Republic from which he and his family had experienced such hardships ; and last though not least , that he should have ignored the claims of his many relatives to the gain of his and their opponents.

In my opinion , his action can be easily explained. To him , a French soldier, a French Prince, and an Academician, the French people embodied all his ideals, and to add to their greatness was only to pursue the work on which his life had been spent. He could no longer hope for fresh and joyful emotions or the realisation of any personal ambitions. Those whom he most loved and for whom he might still have entertained aspirations of future advancement - his wife and his two sons - he had prematurely lost ; and he was too sensible not to know that the Republic having been firmly established , the Restoration of the House of Bourbon was an idle dream . Chantilly was of all the possessions of the French Monarchy, the only one left which recalled its former glory and splendour. That Monarchy had been so long identified with France that her people had as good a claim on it as had the grandchildren of

his brothers , whose immediate descendants , by the laws of their country, would be compelled to divide the estate and disperse the artistic contents of the Chateau , whereas the people would preserve it and them in their entirety for ever.

The singular coincidence of the Duc D'Aumale's death following so closely on that of Lady Wallace so that the two bequests took effect almost simultaneously, invites comparison between the founders of the two most important collections of this century . No two men could have been more dissimilar than the English Marquis and the French Prince . The former alienated himself from his native land and was by nature a foreigner ; the latter sympathised but little with the country in which he was long compelled to reside , and though he did his best to suit himself to its society and its sports, he remained a Frenchman to the backbone. There was no trait in the character of Lord Hertford which could appeal to the imagination ; his existence was that of the 'boulevardier' , and was spent in the boudoir and the café, on the race course and in the sale room . Every opportunity was given him to make a great political or social position , yet but for the pictures and the cabinets he left , and a stray anecdote of which he is the cynical hero , there is no record of his ephemeral career.

When barely out of his teens the Duc D'Aumale won his spurs in Algeria, and during the following fifty years ,whether in exile or at home , he was a prominent figure, courted for his personal charm, and respected for the dignity of his demeanour under the most exigent circumstances. To the wider circles of his acquaintance he extended a splendid hospitality,

while to the privileged few he endeared himself by the grace of his manner, his conversational powers , and the inexhaustible fund of information on which he would liberally draw to the endless delight of his listeners. He was not a man of action but he knew his own mind,and resisted every temptation to go astray . When the Boulanger craze was at its highest and when the Comte de Paris was inveigled into supporting the adventurer , the Duc d'Aumale resolutely set his face against the unnatural combination . In the trial of Marshal Bazaine he displayed both firmness and impartiality ; and though he accepted the Republic , he never forgot that he was a Royal Prince, nor did he ever fail to exact the deference which he considered to be his due . When time will have effaced the recollection of his qualities as a host or a private citizen, his Hitory of the Princes de Condé , a work of great literary as well as historical merit , showing deep research and long labour, will keep his memory green in the world of letters.

The dissimilarity between the Duc d'Aumale and the Marquis of Hertford is best exemplified by the manner in which the two men formed their collections . Hertford House surpasses Chantilly in the quantity as well as in the specific quality of its contents , and embraces a far wider range of works of art. Lord Hertford was a collector in the true sense of the word, to whose net every fish was welcome, provided no fault could be found with its excellence , but whose purchases were the outcome of a passionate desire to heap pictures on pictures and cabinets on cabinets. With the Duc d'Aumale collecting was not an end but a means. His main idea was to illustrate by the

articles he bought, the history of his country, which he loved and of his House of which he was justly proud. Though he occasionally deviated into other lines , as when he bought a miniature picture by Raphael for the fabulous price of twenty five thousand pounds from the Dudley collection , as a rule he restricted himself to works of French artists and works bearing on French subjects . No exception can be taken to the refinement of Lord Hertford's taste , but the Duc d'Aumales was a refined mind, and the mind of a scholar to boot. The only books that Lord Hertford bequeathed to Sir Richard Wallace were of a style that shall be nameless, and he at once consigned them to oblivion ; the Duc d'Aumale founded a library than which there is no more complete, more interesting or more valuable extant.

At whatever epoch Lord Hertford might have lived he could never have been other than what he was - an idle, profligate, spoilt child of fortune. Had the Duc d'Aumale been born in the halcyon days of France, he would not only have been a worthy heir of the Condés, but he would have added to the laurels that were gathered by the great Prince of that name . We must, however, read history as it has been enacted, and though we may deplore its strange and often unaccountable whims and developments, we must accept the facts as they are The world has been all the poorer for the enforced inactivity of the Duc d'Aumale, but those who had the advantage of his acquaintance will always gratefully

remember the many accomplishments of one of the most gallant, chivalrous, and altogether typical specimens of the French grand seigneur.

L. Rochschild
July 1897.

The End.

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